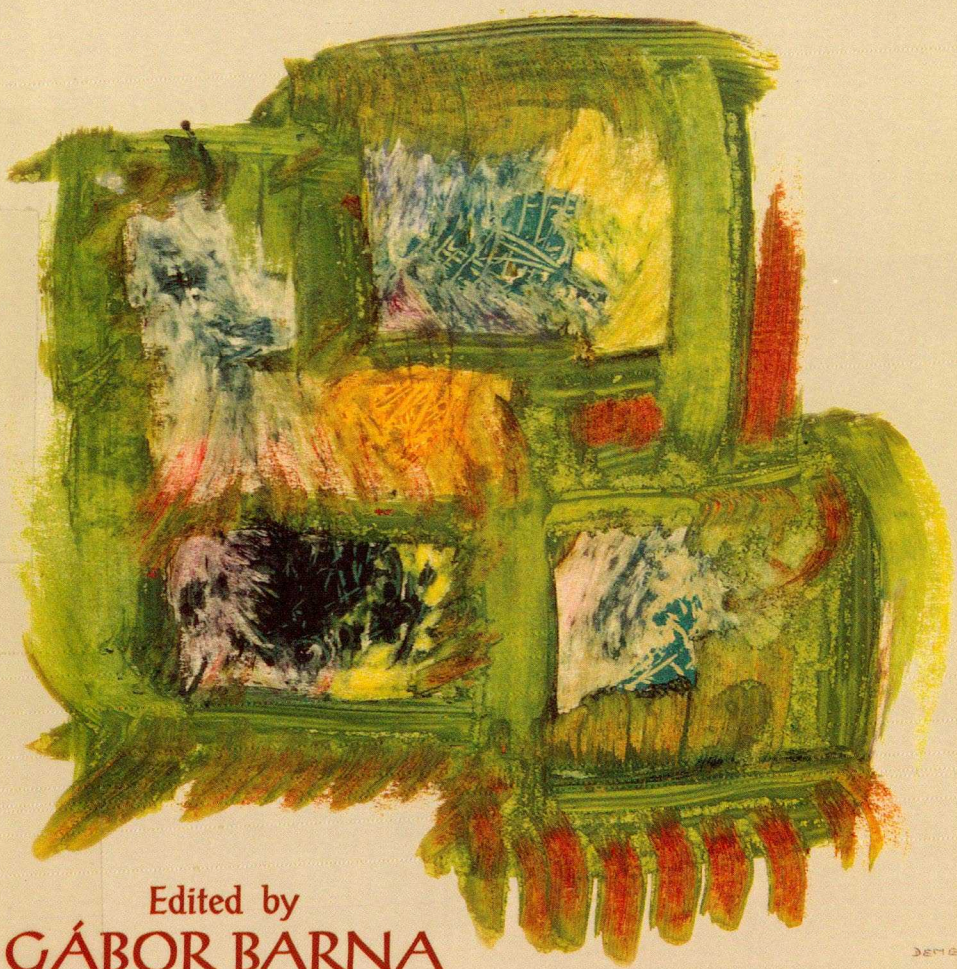
RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND COMMUNITIES

IN THE 19TH–20TH CENTURIES



Edited by

GÁBOR BARNA

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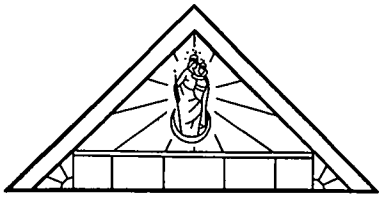

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INTRODUCTION

In 1996, before the 10th Finnish-Hungarian Folklore Symposium held in Jyväskylä, Professor Vilmos Voigt asked me to be the host for the next, 11th meeting. I agreed with pleasure. And although with a delay of six months compared to the original intention, our plans have been realized and between 3rd and 6th of April 1998 the 11th Finnish-Hungarian Folklore Symposium, organized by the Department of Ethnology of the Szeged University took place in Szeged.

This symposium was an important event in the life of our department. We hope it could show our openness and willingness to establish new international relations, our ability to cultivate them and our efforts to participate in international scholarly life.

The Finnish-Hungarian symposium, bilateral in name and title, has been expanded with Estonian participants. It was a great pleasure for us to be able to greet our guests from Finnish and Estonian universities and other scientific institutions here in Szeged.

Right from the outset we built the organization of the seminar on the twin city relations between Szeged and Turku. I would like to express special thanks for the assistance given by Professor Veikko Anttonen who organized the Finnish delegation. The twin city relationship was also a great help: Dr. Éva Ványai, deputy mayor of the municipality of Szeged and Dr.László Farkas, former deputy under-secretary of state and counsellor of the city of Szeged supported our event right from the start. Our Finnish and Estonian guests were the guests not only of our department and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences but also of the city of Szeged. This also shows that close ties between our cities also greatly strengthen the co-operation between our universities and university departments. We would like to maintain these ties in the future too.

In preparation of the conference I was greatly assisted by my colleague Bertalan Pusztai, my students Beáta Ambrózay, Nóra Károly, Beáta Nagy and Márta Takács. I express many thanks for their kind co-operation.

Questions, Problems, Concepts

Before we begin our detailed programme, allow me to say a few words about the aim of the symposium. My interest in the organization of religious groups has personal aspects, too. Seeing the religious movements and the various small communities in Hungary in the late 1980s and the restrictive measures taken against them, the question arose: are these small religious groups alternative forms of organization, individual revolts against the atheistic, totalitarian state? What is the relationship between the old organizational forms, some of them decades or centuries old, and the new ones? What is meant by movement and society (confraternity), sect and minor church, church, new and old? From what kind of point of view can a movement or society be regarded as new or old? Maybe the hermeneutic level of the term "new" is very low and it shows a Christian/European viewpoint.

In all cases (perhaps) the religious movements required and also meant the rethinking and reformulation of the individual's system of relations, these relations being understood to mean the individual's relations with God and his fellow men, as well as with the present, future and past, the whole identity-structure.

This was of a different nature in the 18th century and in the 19th–20th centuries. The Catholic religious confraternities of the 18th century were directed from above and of a strongly ecclesiastical, apologetic and anti-Protestant nature. However, these movements also integrated many elements of folk religiosity. In the Kingdom of Hungary the church policy of enlightened absolutism dissolved these confraternities in the 1780s. This was an intervention from outside and from above in the life of the confraternities, rejecting the popular element. However, before their dissolution a survey was made of the confraternities, recording their assets and the circumstances of their functioning. (This excellent source material has still not been worked up by church history or research on religious ethnology.) After a pause of a few decades, the reorganization of confraternity life began in the middle of the 19th century. The highest point was reached in the late 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century. The confraternities set up in the late 19th and early 20th centuries were generally organized within the frames of the historical churches, were ecclesiastical and also made use of the forms of popular religious practice. In many respects, these confraternities resembled those of the Baroque age organized on a feudal basis, but they also bore many features of the bourgeois associations.

In the 1990s many new religious movements from both East and West appeared in Hungary and many of them have been established as "churches" on the basis of the still very liberal act on the establishment of churches. (There are

about 80 officially registered churches in Hungary.) What does this process reflect? Beside the new forms, the old ones, or at least a few old organizations have been re-established or have existed continuously. Is it merely institutional inertia that keeps them alive, or do they have a real function in society?

In Hungary, as elsewhere in Europe, the confraternities are of mediaeval origin. However, the original societies underwent gradual transformation and, especially during the Reformation, disappeared, then were re-established in the Baroque period. In the late 18th century enlightened absolutism brought some of them under its control and banned others. There was an upswing in the 19th–20th centuries when a whole series of religious confraternities were launched. Why were these confraternities formed, with what aim, who were their members, how did they function, did they develop some kind of symbolic language in the course of their everyday life? Did they have a special social function for the individual and the larger community?

In Hungary religious ethnology has not yet dealt with these questions or the question of the religious movements and confraternities, or only to a very limited extent. Sociology is able to show certain results. However, religious ethnology in Hungary has not yet begun the process of integrating the results of sociology of religion, rethinking its theories from the angle of its own discipline, and elaborating its own specific mode of approach and analysis in order to find its task in the study of religious movements, communities and confraternities as well as the roles of individuals.

In this area I am expecting that this symposium will bring new thoughts, proposals and progress.

The subject of research also needs to be defined. What do we understand by religious movement and religious confraternity? According to some views, they are forms created to meet the need and serve the purpose of religious patronage. Is their role limited only to that? Another big question is what the confraternity meant in the recent past and in the distant past. Are we projecting our present concepts back into social history? It is also worth reflecting on whether these are spiritual movements or whether they can be characterized as religious movements. What do the two concepts (spiritual and religious) cover in this case? What does their meaning indicate? Does it mean a critique of the hierarchized image of the church? Does the appearance of such confraternities in large numbers and their spread point to a breakdown in the operation of the churches? Are they organizations created to carry out tasks not dealt with by the official churches, like religious education, the care of Christian communities, the spread of religious culture, a charity service? Or is their role more than that? Are they an alternative in everyday social and religious life?

According to the holistic concepts of the self, the ego links itself to a superior

being through the confraternity forms. This being can be Mary, Jesus, or God in general. Within this link it can reinterpret itself, its life and social role. In times of rapid social change when individual life frames disintegrate – as was the situation in Hungary in the second half of the 19th century and early years of the 20th century, and following the elections of 1990 – there is an increase in the number and role of religious movements and confraternities. This is because they help to restore the life frames of the individual. Once the society has been restructured, the individual's integration and role in the society is stabilized and the role of the religious confraternities declines.

In 1992 I organized a conference dealing with organizing individuals in religious life. With the support of OTKA (the National Scientific Research Fund) a four-year research project is now beginning to examine the organization, functioning and social role of religious confraternities, parallel with the roles undertaken by individuals. This project supports the publication of the conference material.

All these circumstances and reasons inspired the choice of theme for the symposium. It seems to me from the themes submitted that similar problems concern the Finnish and Estonian workshops. This interest is manifested in their research projects and publications and is also present in the excellent journal, TEMENOS. The theoretical studies or case studies of our symposium deal with this problem and will no doubt answer many of the questions raised. They will certainly provide encouragement for our research here in Szeged.

GÁBOR BARNA
Associate Professor

ONE MARTYR, TWO PILGRIMAGES: THE COMMEMORATION OF A 12TH-CENTURY BISHOP AS A SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT IN THE LATE 20TH CENTURY

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In this paper I will discuss how two spiritual organizations and movements in present-day Finland, the Catholic congregation and the Ecumenical movement, have, during the last 40 years, employed and appropriated the historical memory and narrative tradition concerning the allegedly first bishop in Finland, Bishop Henry, and how they have organized pilgrimages to the commemorative monument erected near the site where the bishop was martyred.

On the one hand, my discussion will focus on the ways in which the appropriation of history and tradition contributes to the creation of a popular religious community, and, on the other, the ways in which the pilgrims' movement in space and time receives its meaning as a movement in society – in other words, as a social movement.

THE MEDIEVAL NARRATIVE OF BISHOP HENRY

According to clerical and popular sources from the 13th and 14th centuries and later – as well as countless Finnish history books which draw on these sources – the first crusade to what is presently known as Finland was made in 1155 by Erik Jedvardsson, the King of Upland, who was later to become the King of Sweden, Erik IX. This was a journey of war, trade and missionary zeal in which Erik was accompanied by an allegedly English-born bishop named Henry (Henrik), who had – according to the legends – recently been nominated the bishop of Uppsala.

The clerical and popular sources also depict how King Erik went back to Sweden, while Bishop Henry stayed on in present-day south-western Finland, in the Turku area, to continue the work of conversion. The next winter, in 1156, Henry was violently killed on the ice of Lake Köyliö, approximately 100 kilometers north of Turku, when returning from a preaching trip to Lower Satakunta, a region of early Christian influence (for this, see HUURRE 1979: 161–163). According to popular sources dating from the 17th century, the killer has been known by the name Lalli, a Finnish man and a resident of the village of Köyliö.

It is beyond our means of scholarship to guarantee the historical validity of these clerical and popular sources. There are thousands of local saints in the world and seventeen of them are known by the name Henrik (LEMPIÄINEN 1989: 22). Except for a liturgi-

cal legend celebrating King Erik, there is no historical evidence whatsoever of a bishop of Uppsala with the name Henry (SUVANTO 1985: 153). There are no contemporary historical records to document the event of the murder or its immediate historical context. The earliest sources that mention Bishop Henry or his killing are more than a hundred years younger than the narrated event, and they were not produced for history writing but for liturgical purposes (PIRINEN 1987: 20). The existing documents, which all date from later periods, are based on the evidence of the liturgical texts. Similarly, the voyage – the so-called first crusade – allegedly made to Finland by King Erik and Bishop Henry finds no authentication from historical documents (SUVANTO 1987).

These are some of the reasons why we must question if there is more fiction than fact in the clerical and popular legends describing the first crusade and the events around the life and death of Bishop Henry. It is possible that the said crusade never took place and that Bishop Henry never existed. In fact, the point of departure for most present-day research into medieval times in Finland is the notion that the country was christianized gradually over the centuries, instead of it having come about from a crusade (e.g. GRÄSLUND 1997: 31).

However, we still have reason to believe that a Christian preacher by the name Henry or Henrik, who was killed in Köyliö or elsewhere in present-day south-western Finland, was once buried in the original wooden church at Nousiainen (SUVANTO 1987: 150–152). Yet, it is also possible that somehow the history of this person has been mixed up with the history of a certain Bishop Henrik of Sigtuna in Sweden, who was killed in exile in 1134 in Scania (Skåne), which is in present-day southern Sweden. It has also been suggested that instead of having been an Englishman, Henry, as his name Henrik in Finnish suggests, was a German monk or priest sent to the Finnish-speaking territories by the archbishopry of Hamburg–Bremen (SUVANTO 1987: 154).

Regardless of whether the story of the killing of Bishop Henry represents the actual historical truth or not, we must acknowledge that its ramifications are quite real. The historical authenticity of the original story can therefore be of only secondary importance compared to its mythological significance, and to the rhetorical and political meaning of the narrated events and their various interpretations.

What is definitely certain about the legend of Bishop Henry and his killing is that the medieval Catholic church in Finland, seated in Turku Cathedral, together with the archbishopric of Uppsala, at some point named Bishop Henry the patron saint of the diocese of Turku and the apostle of Finland. It thus founded a martyr cult for the commemoration of the bishop and the miracles said to have taken place after he died. This, the Catholic church did locally, without any official authorization or canonization from the Pope.

The church also elevated the journey which Erik and Henry allegedly made to Finland to the status of a crusade, thus giving a religious and moral justification to the expansion of Swedish influence and political control in the Finnish-speaking areas. This expansion is directly related to the Swedish interests in warding off both the Danes and the Russians, who were also interested in controlling these areas and collecting taxes from their inhabitants. In this regard it is possible that the life and death of Bishop Henry is a mythical or allegorical narrative composed – with both fact and fiction – and author-

ized by the transculturally oriented Catholic church for the sake of creating a local martyr cult and a cult-centered religious community whose territory could then be administered, taxed, and controlled by the church and by the kingdom of Sweden. In other words, the martyr cult has sacralized the land and through this sacralization legitimated its control (cf. ABRAHAMS 1993: 17). Indeed, there is reason to believe that the creation of the martyr cult for the symbolic construction and consolidation of a religious and civic community may in fact have been more instrumental in the integration of the Finnish-speaking territories into the kingdom of Sweden than any use of the force of arms.[1]

The Catholic St. Henry martyr cult, the first and oldest martyr cult in Finland, was performed and presented mainly in church liturgies, pilgrimages, memorial festivals and church iconography. Illustrations depicting the sea voyage by King Erik and Bishop Henry, the murder scene as well as the encounter between the martyr and the murderer were painted in church walls in many places in Finland, and also in a few places in Sweden.

In Sweden in the 13th century, King Erik was the major saint of the Church of Uppsala (AILI–FERM–GUSTAVSON 1991: 90) and throughout the medieval times the foremost of all patron saints in the country (ÅBERG 1993: 216). A liturgical legend about King Erik was composed, apparently in conjunction with the attempt to have him officially canonized by the Pope. This never happened but he was generally worshipped as a saint in the Nordic churches (ÅBERG 1993: 216). To accompany the Legend of King Erik, a liturgical Latin legend about Bishop Henry was composed in Turku towards the end of the 13th century – apparently for the purpose of legitimating his status as a martyr saint.[2] The Legend of Saint Henry was performed annually in the Turku Cathedral during St. Henry memorial festivals (RINNE 1932; HAAVIO 1948). One of these was on the 20th of January, to commemorate the day of his death, and the other, 18th of June, to commemorate the day when his bones were transferred from the church of Nousiainen to the newly built Turku Cathedral. The transportation of the remains is said to have been taken place in the year 1300, in conjunction with the consecration of the Cathedral as the Cathedral Church of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Henry.

In addition to the rituals and festivals in Turku Cathedral, one of the main elements in the Bishop Henry martyr cult was the annual pilgrimage which the Church organized to selected places mentioned in the liturgical and popular legends dealing with the bishop's killing. In this, Nousiainen was an important site of ritualization, because the bishop's body is said to have been first buried there, in a church first mentioned in historical documents in 1232. Nousiainen is also the original seat of the diocese. The old wooden church was replaced with a stone church, built according to earlier calculations towards the end of the 13th century, but dated in the most recent study to the mid-15th

[1] A somewhat similar, but ideologically more charged, theory is suggested by the historian Martti Linna, according to whom the legend of the martyr bishop functioned directly in the service of what he calls the Swedish occupation of Finland. The Swedes, according to Linna, ruled by stigmatizing the Finns with the martyr cult and by imposing on them a sense of guilt, which the Finns had to redeem by paying taxes and showing loyalty. The legend, according to Linna, also made it appear that the country was of old a part of Sweden and gave the Swedish conquest and occupation a moral justification. (See LINNA 1996: 201–202.)

[2] For the text in Latin, see e.g. MALINIEMI 1957.

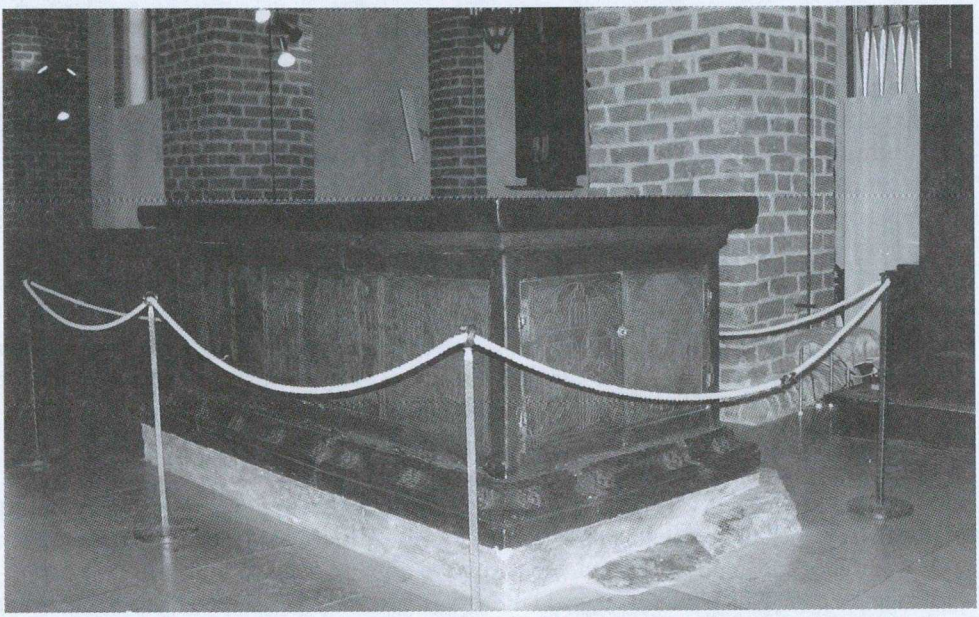

Fig. 1. The Bishop Henry cenotaph in the Church of St. Henry in Nousiainen. Photo by P. Anttonen.

century (HIEKKANEN 1994: 224–225, 250). It is officially named the Church of St. Henry. The alleged original grave of the bishop was replaced by a cenotaph, which was apparently brought from Flanders around 1429 (KLINGE 1983: 49) and decorated with 12 bronze carvings depicting the life and death of Bishop Henry.[3]

Another site of ritualization was a small island in the vicinity of the said murder place in Lake Köyliö. This is where the pilgrim road ended. Archeological findings show that there was a chapel built on this island between 1364 and 1378 and it was used for sacrificial purposes until at least 1422, after which it was gradually ruined because of the rising water level. The chapel was called St. Henry's Chapel and the island, which is today called Kirkkokari (Church Rock), has also been known as Henry's Rock or Saint Henry's island.

For centuries the interpretation of the narrative of the bishop's murder was authorized by the Catholic church. According to many liturgical and clerical sources, Bishop Henry disciplined an impenitent murderer who in return killed him. This emphasizes his

[3] New methods of dating medieval churches have revealed that most of the approximately 100 grey stone churches in Finland are much younger than previously thought. Instead of dating from the period between 1250 and 1520, they are now shown to date from the period between 1430 and 1550 (see HIEKKANEN 1994). On the basis of this it has been suggested that Christianity arrived in Finland with a much slower pace than previously assumed (see DRAKE 1996). According to LINNA (1996: 186), also the St. Henry cult has a later origin than previously believed.

incorrigible paganism, but it has often been also understood to make a statement about the Finns in general: the killing of the first bishop in Finland has signified the primitiveness and backwardness of the Finns vis-à-vis their western neighbors, and indicated their stubbornness and hardheadedness in the reception of Christianity and other western innovations. The killing of the bishop has symbolized the marginality and peripheriality of Finland.

In addition to the church-centered ways of commemoration and ritualization, the legend of the death of Bishop Henry has lived for centuries in the songs and orally transmitted historical narratives of the people living along the old pilgrim road and elsewhere. The major source documenting the popular oral tradition is an epic song called Bishop Henry's Death Song (Piispa Henrikin surmavirsi), which is, according to Matti Kuusi, the best known specimen of oral poetry dating from the Roman Catholic period in Finland (KUUSI et al. 1977: 555). Emphasizing its national significance, Kuusi has called this text "the national legend of Finland" (KUUSI 1963: 307). The oldest of the manuscripts in existence was written down by an unknown person in western Finland in approximately 1671. (See also ANTTONEN 1997: 7–11.)

The Catholic Bishop Henry martyr cult came to an end during the Reformation, which in Finland was a process that lasted approximately one hundred years, between the 1520s and 1620s. In legal terms the Reformation meant the criminalization of Catholicism for indicating disloyalty to the state. In religious terms it meant the Lutheranization of the Christian faith and its followers, the vernacularization of church sermons, and in a quest for religious uniformity the removal of all traces of Catholicism. It therefore meant the end of the Catholic pilgrimages to the ritual sites commemorating Bishop Henry, and as a consequence, gradually over the centuries, the pilgrim road disappeared from the map, from the territory, and from social memory.

TWO PRESENT-DAY PILGRIMAGES

It took 400 years before the Catholic Saint Henry martyr cult re-emerged in Finland. Finland's disconnection from the Swedish state in the beginning of the 19th century and her new status as a Grand Duchy in the Russian Empire gradually led to the liberalization of Catholicism from its legal constraints. The first Catholic congregation in Finnish territory had already been founded in 1799 in Viipuri in "Old Finland", and after 1812, when the Viipuri area was reconnected to the rest of the country, this became the first Catholic congregation of Finland (VUORELA 1989: 22–36). The second congegration was founded in Helsinki sometime in the mid-1850s (VUORELA 1989: 37) and the church, which was consecrated in 1860, was named the Church of St. Henry. The original plan in 1857 was to dedicate the church first to Virgin Mary and then to St. Erik, but St. Henry was chosen because his name had got exposure in the recent celebrations for the 700th anniversary of the first crusade to Finland (VUORELA 1989: 38).

The Catholic church was officially registered as a religious community as late as in 1929, after the constitution of the Republic of Finland in 1919 and the Act on Freedom of Worship passed in 1922 had secured the rights of citizenship to all regardless of the relig-

Figs. 2 and 3. A Catholic mass at Kirkkokari in Köyliö. Photos by P. Anttonen.

ious community to which they were affiliated (HEINO 1997: 16, 70–71). In 1951 the church organized a new pilgrimage to the murder site of their martyr hero, and since 1955 the Saint Henry pilgrimage has been organized annually on the Sunday closest to the 18th of June. As far as I am aware, this is the only Catholic pilgrimage in the Nordic countries today.

Fig. 4. Ecumenical pilgrims carrying a cross along the St. Henry pilgrim road. Photo by P. Anttonen.

The year 1955 marked the 800th anniversary of the arrival of Christianity in Finland and, on that occasion, in the wake of a global ecumenical movement, the Lutheran congregation of Köyliö erected an ecumenical monument, a memorial statue, in the honor of Bishop Henry, "The Apostle of Finland" on the small Kirkkokari island close to the said murder place in Lake Köyliö. The Catholic pilgrims hold their mass for their martyred saint every year at the foot of this ecumenical monument.

In addition to the Catholic readoption of their interrupted pilgrimage tradition, the legacy of Bishop Henry has recently been appropriated within an influential ecumenical movement, which has joined the three major churches, the Lutheran, the Catholic and the Greek Orthodox churches, to seek ways in which the different sections of Christianity can cooperate and improve mutual understanding. One of the ways in which this is done is to commemorate and celebrate together Bishop Henry and his role in the Christianization of Finland. Bishop Henry is emphatically a culture hero in the ecumenical movement, the bringer of Christianity to Finland.

The ecumenical movement organizes pilgrimages in the honor of their culture hero, following the original pilgrim route in places where this is still possible. In fact, one of the early impulses for the ecumenical pilgrimage was the discovery of the remains of the original pilgrim route in the 1970s and its establishment as a public hiking track. The ecumenical pilgrimage is called the Saint Henry Road Pilgrimage and it is organized by the Saint Henry Road Pilgrimage Committee, which is based in Turku and its vicinity.

The main event in the ecumenical commemoration of Bishop Henry is a 7-day pilgrimage from Turku Cathedral first to the Church of St. Henry at Nousiainen and then

Fig. 5. Mr. Antti Lehtinen, the main organizer of the St. Henry Road Pilgrimage, and Mr. Leo Vanamo, carrier of the pilgrims' cross. Photo by P. Anttonen.

through Yläne and Köyliö to the town of Kokemäki, where Bishop Henry is said to have preached before he was killed. There are pauses for prayers along the way as well as services together with local congregations. The journey finishes at the Kirkkokari island in Köyliö, where a Eucharist in memory of St. Henry is held together with the Catholic pilgrims. The length of the route is 140 kilometers, but only approximately 107 kilometers of the journey are covered on foot. The 7-day pilgrimage is organized every third or fourth year, the first one in 1983, the second in 1989, the third in 1993 and the fourth in 1996. In the intermediary years the ecumenic pilgrimage is one or two days long, extending from Turku to Nousiainen or from Yläne to Köyliö.

The participants in the ecumenical Saint Henry Road Pilgrimage come from all Christian churches in Finland, as well as from other countries such as Sweden, Russia and Germany. The majority of the Finnish participants are Lutherans with an ecumenical world view or an interest in or curiosity about Catholic and Orthodox ways. The pilgrimages therefore, at least partially, exemplify a general present-day trend in which members of the Lutheran church have grown interested in adopting selected traits from the other Christian churches – much because of their feeling that the Evangelical Lutheran church has stripped religion of its iconographic aesthetics. One aspect in this trend is the growing interest in public religious processions, which, in Finland, until recently have only been known among Catholics as well as the Orthodox in the Eastern part of the country and on both sides of the Finnish–Russian border. Lutherans, too, have started to organize religious processions in public places, for instance on city streets.

Fig. 6. Teemu Sippo speaking at the Catholic St. Henry mass in Köyliö and commenting on the local hero cult around the killer of St. Henry. Photo by P. Anttonen.

In addition to the publicity value, both the street procession and the pilgrimage carry psychologically constituted religious value. When I participated in the 1995 ecumenical pilgrimage as an observer, I could infer that travelling, moving between places, is at the same time a physical and a spiritual exercise and as such, conceptualized as a sort of a rite of passage in attaining both a material and a spiritual goal. As a shared experience, the pilgrimage is felt to create – and the participants are rhetorically encouraged by the organizers to feel – a sense of unity and communion, a sense of a moral community which represents in miniature and metonomy the moral community of Christians in general.

For example, according to Antti Lehtinen, the main organizer of the ecumenical pilgrimage, the greatest reward for the pilgrims is the experience of being connected with one another, eating together, sleeping side by side in the same tents or on the floor of an empty school building, or washing each other's feet in a pond at a resting place (LEHTINEN 1995). Unlike in a prototypical pilgrimage, which is "an ascetic journey of religious obligation to obtain healing and purification" (SOCOLOV 1997: 647), the participants in the ecumenical St. Henry pilgrimage are brought together by a joint interest in sharing individual religious, physical and psychological experiences. Their sense of community emerges from their joint activities of hiking, devotional services, praying and hymn-singing.

Yet, in addition to collectively shared individual religious and aesthetic meanings, the ecumenical pilgrimage as social action participates in a number of discourses on

religion and society, history, local and national heritage, heritage politics, the construction of "tradition" as a marker of cultural continuity, the relations between the different sections and churches of Christianity, the institutional representation of these churches within the pilgrimage context, the construction of Finnishness and its collective mythologies, the geopolitical positioning of Finnishness in the European context, etc. This makes the pilgrimage a social movement which in many ways is indicative of the late 20th century socio-cultural and political environment and climate.

The annual Catholic pilgrimage to the murder site carries no national or nationalistic significance. One of the many reasons for this is that the Catholic congregation in Finland is small and mostly has foreigners as both members and bishops. The bishops come mainly from Holland and Poland. Another related reason is that from the viewpoint of Protestant nationalism, Catholicism appears as non-national or even disloyal to the nation-state, and within the Finnish Reformation-minded nation-building, especially in the 19th century, people have tended to regard the country's medieval culture and its heritage also as non-national, more or less, as foreign. In fact, one of the most central characteristics in the construction of Finnish national symbols in the 19th century, for example the national epic Kalevala, was to disregard both Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy in the history of the Finnish nation and its collective representations. According to the culture political doctrine of the time, true markers of Finnishness were to be found only when looking beyond the country's Catholic past, to prehistorical antiquity.

The ecumenical movement, on the other hand, has rather strong orientation towards the nationalization of their reading of the Bishop Henry legacy, regardless of the many international participants in their pilgrimages. In fact, there is an openly expressed interest in contextualizing the historical vision of the Bishop Henry tradition with Finnish national culture. For example, in the preface for the booklet which the Saint Henry Road Committee published in 1979 for what was then called the revival of the Saint Henry Road pilgrimage, the Lutheran archbishop Mikko Juva wrote that a pilgrim on the Saint Henry Road does not only follow the oldest Finnish traces of the Christian faith but also the decisive stages of development of the first transition period "in our national history" (SUOMINEN 1979: 3).[4]

In a country which is almost 100 per cent Evangelical Lutheran,[5] and which up to the modern times to a great extent denied or marginalized its Catholic past, the ecumenical movement provides a means with which Lutherans can appropriate the country's medieval Catholic heritage without losing their Protestant nationalist foundation. Within this discursive practice, the Lutheran appropriation of the country's Catholic history selects those aspects and elements which are deemed valuable from a Protestant nationalist perspective and then draws them into a Protestant nationalist reading of the Finnish national heritage. The ecumenical arena provides both a politically designed and an emotionally charged framework for the making of the medieval cultural heritage part of "our national

[4] This can be regarded as being ideologically parallel to the statement made by the folklorist Matti Kuusi, according to whom the Bishop Henry Death Song is "the national legend of Finland" (KUUSI 1963: 307).

[5] The Lutheran homogeneity has gradually decreased during the present century. In 1922, 98,1% of the population was Lutheran, in 1960, 92,4%, and in 1995, 85, 8% (HEINO 1997: 24).

history". For this reason the ecumenical pilgrimage – unlike the Catholic pilgrimage – also succeeds in receiving the attention of the nationally oriented public media. Every year Finnish daily newspapers carry pictures and stories on the ecumenical pilgrimage, but as far as I know, never on the Catholic pilgrimage.

In addition to the national framework the ecumenical pilgrimage operates in the context of localism. One aspect in this is that as a procession through public places, the pilgrimage makes statements about its route and the territories it enters and passes by. On the one hand, the participants may express interest in historical information concerning the areas they are passing through. Hiking through historical sites may even function as a means with which the people link themselves to the territory and the narratives about its history.

On the other hand, there is a growing interest in the St. Henry Road pilgrimage in the municipalities situated along the old pilgrim road, as it provides them with a means to construct part of their local selfhood with the help of the Bishop Henry legacy. In addition to Turku, Nousiainen and Köyliö, the major sites of ritualization, this concerns such places as Rusko, Masku, Mynämäki, Yläne and Kokemäki. The narrative and ritual tradition of the Bishop Henry commemoration provides them with an argumentative context in which they can link their locally anchored historical themes and sites to the making of national cultural history. They can argue for their value as part of the Finnish national heritage.

This link is made explicit most conspicuously with the means of both historical and newly erected monuments. The new monuments are mostly crosses, which serve to indicate a tendency to mark the pilgrim route, along its lengthy course, with a variety of crosses. A cross may stand alone on a field or in the middle of a forest, on top of a medieval grey stone church, or it is carried by hand in front of the group of pilgrims.

This takes us to something that I consider to be one of the major characteristics in the ecumenical St. Henry pilgrimage. According to Antti Lehtinen, the main organizer, the ecumenical Saint Henry Road Pilgrimage differs from all other pilgrimages in Europe by containing a number of cult sites along the pilgrim road, and by being a cult site "throughout its 150 kilometers' length" (LEHTINEN 1995). It is beyond my knowledge to ascertain the uniqueness of the Saint Henry Road Pilgrimage in this respect, but it is true that even the original medieval pilgrim route comprised of a number of important places of ritualization, instead of merely leading to one sacred site at the end of the pilgrim road. Recent decades have witnessed a major increase in these places, as newly established historical and religious monuments, mainly crosses, have been erected or re-erected along or nearby the pilgrim road. One of these ceremonies was held in Yläne in June 1995 (see Fig. 7).

Yet, the crosses erected along the way are not mere religious tokens but landmarks in a discourse which blends history with religion and religion with history. For example in the Yläne case, the erecting of the memorial cross does not only signify religious symbolism but is also expected to convey specific historical meanings and symbols: how the area has been inhabited as early as the Iron Age, how academic research in the area can possibly yield information about ancient residential developments, changes in the topography, the history of agriculture, the diffusion of Christianity, the remains of a possible

Fig. 7. The ecumenical consecration of the Kappelniittu memorial cross in Yläne. Photo by P. Anttonen.

medieval chapel and a cemetary and a prehistorical cultivated field, which are all designed, in a plan by the municipality of Yläne, to become elements in a future history park in the area. (Lehdistötiedote 17. 6. 1995).

By giving prominence to the historical landmarks and by making the visits to these landmarks part of the collective activity of a religious community, the ecumenical pilgrimage does not only combine worshipping with hiking or with a general interest in local history. In other words, the pilgrimage is not only a religious or spiritual experience which gives the participants a chance to join together in hiking, devotional services, praying and hymn-singing in a "historically rich" environment. In addition to this, it seeks to establish more ways to sacralize land and topography within a religious framework that at the same time is a national framework. The tendency to mark more and more places with memorial crosses, which in the Yläne case has been criticized by the Catholics as an unnecessary invention of new traditions (see LAUKAMA 1995), serves as an indication of a history cult in which the honoring of a culture hero functions and operates in the larger context of ritualizing history and historical consciousness. The ritualization of history may be seen as drawing the national into the category of religion (see ANTTONEN 1993; SMART 1983). In this the ecumenical pilgrimage differs greatly from the Catholic pilgrimage.

Yet another aspect that I find worth mentioning here is that, as noted by I. M. Lewis, pilgrimages stimulate economic as well as religious transactions in a wider system of exchange (LEWIS 1991: x–xi). Accordingly, the link between the ecumenical pilgrimage and the nationally significant historical monuments along the way has increasing economic meaning for the municipalities along the pilgrim route, as such a link can be put

Fig. 8. A sweater with a bishop figure and a map of Nousiainen. Photo by P. Anttonen.

on display in saleable and consumable objects, touristic sights and souvenirs. The link between local sites and national heritage also gives these municipalities a competitive advantage in distinguishing them from other local communities in the same region as well as from other regions in the same national unit. In other words, it provides them with a means to construct a recognizable and marketable identity.

In addition to supporting local and national projects or creating a sense of integration with fellow participants, the pilgrimage as a specific genre of social and religious behavior makes a reference to similar pilgrimages elsewhere. Instead of being a uniquely Finnish enterprise, the ecumenical pilgrimage is conceptualized especially by its organizers as part of a network of present-day European pilgrimages, among which probably the best known today is the pilgrimage and the pilgrim road to the grave of St. Jacob at Santiago de Compostela in Spain. The ecumenical pilgrimage shares this network function with its Catholic counterpart, which especially in medieval times was an integral part of the translocal experience of European Catholicism. However, since the ecumenical pilgrimage links religion with the nation, its translocalism is transnational in nature, for which reason its transnational connections signal the "Europeanness" of Finland – as understood within the present-day discourse on European integration. In fact, the original idea to organize an ecumenical pilgrimage in Finland came in the early 1980s from the Vatican supported Europa Wallfahrt Gesellschaft and the German Catholic theologist Gerhard Specht, who had organized pilgrimages in approximately ten European countries after the Second World War.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let me make a few additional remarks about the relations between the Catholic and the Lutheran church as regards the ownership of the medieval Christian heritage. I emphasize this because it is the issue of this ownership and the public representations that are authorized with this ownership which makes these pilgrimages movements in society, social movements, in addition to movement in space.

Although there are two pilgrim groups wandering the same roads, there is no real rivalry between the groups. Yet, there is no basis for combining these groups either, to make only one pilgrimage. The two pilgrim groups represent two different approaches to Christianity and a slightly different reading of history and mythology, but there is not enough at stake here politically for any conflicts to emerge. There are possibly more common elements than divergent elements in the two respective readings. For both of them Bishop Henry is a culture hero, the bringer of Christianity to Finland, and as such, a martyr of their religion – a Jesus figure.

Yet, there is also a difference in the symbolic meaning of the two Bishop Henry commemorations. For the Catholics, Bishop Henry is a Catholic martyr hero, and the ritualization of his memory represents a continuation of a long interrupted martyr cult. For the ecumenics, on the other hand, Bishop Henry is an ecumenical symbol, and as such, a symbol of the arrival of Christianity in Finland. In addition, the ecumenical St. Henry Road pilgrimage, as well as the ecumenical commemoration of the Bishop Henry legacy in general, is claimed to symbolize the original unity of the Christian church. It thus represents, at least for some activists, a symbolic "return" to the original undivided Christian church. In some aspects this ecumenical "return" can be interpreted to contest the Catholics' right of ownership to their martyr cult and to the medieval Catholic heritage.

For example, the Evangelical Lutheran church has recently shown a keen interest in emphasizing a direct genealogical link between its archbishop and Bishop Henry. The Saint Henry Road Committee published a booklet in 1979 for the revival of the Saint Henry Road pilgrimage, and the preface was written by archbishop Mikko Juva, who presented himself as "the present occupant of the Bishop Henry seat". (SUOMINEN 1979: 3.) In a similar manner, the present archbishop of the Lutheran Church in Finland, Mr. John Vikström claims in a recently written article that he is the 53rd occupant of St. Henry's bishop's seat (VIKSTRÖM 1997: 9). Accordingly, Antti Lehtinen, the main organizer of the ecumenical pilgrimage opened his speech at the above mentioned consecration of the Kappelniittu memorial cross in Yläne by addressing archbishop Vikström with the epithet "the 53rd occupant of St. Henry's seat". (LEHTINEN 1995).

In spite of the fact that the local organizational structure of the pre-Reformation Catholic Church was continued in the Lutheran Church to some extent, these terms of address can be understood as indications of a more recent wish to extend the legacy and genealogy of the Finnish Protestant church further back in history, beyond the doctrinal protest of the Reformation (see also FORSBERG 1997: 92). Since the ecumenical St. Henry pilgrimage is one of the arenas in which this wish is made visible, the two groups

of pilgrims pass through a physical and symbolic territory, a sacred topography, which is in many respects a contested – albeit a discreetly contested – terrain of both society and history.

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NEW AND OLD RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES IN 20TH-CENTURY ESTONIA, ON THE EXAMPLE OF WEST ESTONIA

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West Estonia has been the main centre of Christian religious movements in Estonia from at least the 18th century onwards. At the end of the 20th century, as before, religious life in West Estonia appears to be more active than elsewhere in Estonia.

To explain the relative vitality of religious movements in West Estonia as compared to the rest of the country, I will first present an overview of religious movements in West Estonia from the 1740s to the end of the 1980s, also throwing some light on religious life elsewhere in Estonia and on the political events which have exercised considerable influence on Estonian religious life in the 20th century. Finally I will give a survey of religious communities in Estonia and especially in West Estonia since the end of the 1980s. After the occupation of Estonia by the anti-religion Soviet Union, the data on Estonian religious life are fragmentary. We also lack trustworthy statistics on Estonian religious movements and their adherents in the 1990s. Therefore I shall limit myself, in the final part of my paper, to the preliminary results of my research on West Estonian religious life.

OVERVIEW OF THE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN ESTONIA, PARTICULARLY WEST ESTONIA FROM THE 1740S TO THE END OF THE 1980S

1. RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN WEST ESTONIA FROM THE 1740S TO THE 1940S

Beginning with the Lutheran reformation which reached Estonia in the year 1524, Estonia has been a predominantly Lutheran country similar to the neighbouring Finland and Sweden. Lutheran Church has dominated Estonian religious life up to the present day and held a particularly influential position in the Estonian society up to the year 1940. Nevertheless, after the 1740s several religious movements have occurred in Estonia occasionally conflicting with the established Lutheran Church, and after the 1880s, various Protestant churches sprang up and developed into a considerable power side by side with the Lutheran and the Orthodox Churches; the latter began to win wider support in the 19th century. The new confessions got the opportunities for free development only under

the Republic of Estonia, in 1918–1940, and gathered new momentum again after the collapse of the Soviet power in Estonia, from the end of the 1980s onward.

Throughout the discussed period, the main hubs of the new religious movements have been in the coastal areas of West Estonia and on the islands – the present-day counties of Läänemaa, Hiiumaa and Saaremaa – inhabited up to WW II not only by the Estonians, but also by the community of the Estonian Swedes, among whom many of the new Estonian religious movements first got their start.

More serious christianization among the formerly Lutheran Estonians began with the advent of the United Brethren (Moravian) movements in Estonia which spread widely in the 1740s and gained especially strong support among the Western Estonians and Estonian Swedes of the Noarootsi and Vormsi parishes in Läänemaa county (see: ILJA 1995; GIRGENSOHN 1869: 453; RUSSWURM 1855: 159, 283–284; PHILIPP 1974: 405–409; PÕLDMÄE 1935: 127–128; PÕLDMÄE 1940).

Around 1814, one of the most charismatic movements within the Brethren congregations of Western Estonia – the Movement of 'Heaven-Travellers' emerged (see PÕLDMÄE 1935). Within the movement there arose several visionaries and prophets who claimed they had seen revelations and conducted their own charismatic prayer meetings. Some of the so-called prophets from Hiiumaa, accused of celebrating the Holy Communion among themselves (RUSSWURM 1855: 235), and various other enthusiastic adherents caused much trouble to the Lutheran pastors and the Moravians. In the early 1820s that ecstatic movement gradually died out, but the Brethren congregations of Western Estonia continued their activities.

Both the Brethren congregations and the Movement of the Heaven-Travellers, however, stayed inside the Lutheran Church. The first new Protestant denominations in Estonia came into being together with new religious movement which can probably be regarded as the most extensive revivalist movement in West Estonia during the 18th–20th centuries. The 'Awakening of Läänemaa' began with the arrival of two Swedish missionaries, T. E. Thorén and L. J. Österblom, in 1873. Due to their active preaching, new religious awakening began to spread among the Estonian Swedes and soon after among the Estonians, too. Realizing how sinful they were, people began to strive for a better moral life and salvation of their souls, finally experienced a religious awakening and were 'saved'. There appeared more and more local 'readers' (preachers) and 'prophets' whose followers went in for peculiar practises, such as ecstatic jumping, dancing, laughing, and hand-clapping at the prayer meetings (see: ÖSTERBLOM 1927; SCHULTZ 1880: 580–581; OSTERBLOM 1885: 39–43; NORMANN 1885: 113; BUSCH 1926: 32; *Protokoll...* 1883: 5, 1884: 6).

In the 1870s–1880s, religious awakening swept all over Läänemaa and Hiiumaa and spread on to the neighbouring counties (*Protokoll...* 1880: 15, 1881: 5, 1882: 5; SCHULTZ 1880: 579). At the beginning of the 1880s, many converts lamented that they could not remain members of the Lutheran congregations because of the immorality and lack of real faith among the members there. The awakened people began to secede from the Lutheran Church, which first happened in 1880 in Vormsi Island inhabited mainly by the Estonian Swedes (*Protokoll...* 1881: 5–6; BUSCH 1928: 28–29; SPINDLER 1893: 156–157, 161; *Walgus*, No. 5, 19, 1884).

As the persecution by the authorities (including Lutheran Church) grew more vigorous, the movement dispersed into several factions: converts organized the first Baptist, Irvingate and Free Believers' congregations in Estonia; many accepted the Greek Orthodox faith in the 1880s[1] (*Protokoll...* 1884: 6–7). Among the new members of the 'Russian church' there were also hundreds of Estonian Swedes (*Protokoll...* 1885: 7; *Istoriko-statistitcheskoje...* 1895: 540; *Iz Arhiva...* 1910: 39 ff.). Many converts lost their intense religious feeling or turned back to the Lutheran church.

Up to the turn of the century, the most numerous of the new denominations were the Free Believers' congregations which also became popular in Saaremaa county, at the end of the 19th century. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the most influential among the new congregations in West Estonia have been the Baptists.

Religious life outside the Lutheran church in the main centres of these religious movements in West Estonia remained active also during the Estonian Republic: in the 1920s and 1930s, several new congregations arose in addition to the former ones and one could find in West Estonia Baptists, Free Believers, Irvingates, Methodists, Pentecostalists, Urshanists, Adventists, Moravians and different Free congregations (*Teekäija*, No 10, 1924; EDERBERG 1935: 107; *Eesti Kirik*, Nos 9–10, 1934: 70). The Pentecostal congregations in Läänemaa and Methodist congregations in Saaremaa[2] stood out among them as the most influential new religious movements in addition to Baptists and Free Believers.

Although in West Estonia the relative number of sectarians was higher than anywhere else in the country, their percentage of the total population was not very high, particularly as compared with that of Lutherans. At the same time it can be said that whereas most of the sectarians could be considered deeply religious (many denominations like the Baptists, Free Believers, Pentecostalists, Methodists and various Free Congregations granted membership only to the really faithful or 'awakened to faith' and did not baptise nor consider as members children), the percentage of the relatively indifferent church members was actually much higher among the Lutherans. The registers of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (subsequently the EELC) listed 847 600 souls in 1936, but only 30.8 per cent of them paid the church dues in the same year (GNADENTEICH 1995: 102).

According to the census of 1922, the population of Lääne- and Hiiumaa totalled 75 991; 82.8 per cent of them were Lutherans, 12.9 per cent Orthodox, 2.8 per cent Baptists (2156 people) and 0.9 per cent adhered to other religious communities (701); 315 persons were non-believers and confession was unknown in 372 cases. In the island of Hiiumaa by itself (from the 16th century up to 1946 Hiiumaa formed part of the county of

[1] The accepting of Greek Orthodoxy in Lääne- and Hiiumaa was the first and last mass conversion of Lutherans to Orthodoxy in North Estonia. In South Estonia, a major conversion to Orthodoxy inspired mostly by economical reasons, took place already in the 1840s. However, Saaremaa became the greatest centre of Orthodoxy in Estonia and even in the year 1901, about 40 per cent of its population were Orthodox (*Saarlane*, No 20, 1901).

[2] The first Methodist congregation in Estonia was founded in 1910, in Saaremaa. In 1924, 411 souls or 45 per cent of all the Estonian Methodists belonged to the Methodist congregation in Saaremaa (KLAOS 1924: 31).

Läänemaa), 74 per cent of the inhabitants were Lutheran, 12.9 per cent Orthodox, 6.6 per cent Baptists and 2.6 per cent belonged to other religious communities; only 170 persons confessed no religion and confession was unknown in 190 cases (1922... 1924: 13, 36–7).

Thus, in 1922 altogether 2857 persons (3.7 per cent) in Lääne- and Hiiumaa admitted that they belonged to some Free Church congregations; by the year 1934 the number had risen to 4458 persons or about 6 per cent of the population, considerably outstripping the other counties; next came Saaremaa with 2333 (EDERBERG 1935: 115). Out of the 13 congregations belonging to the Estonian Association of Free Believers in 1934, for instance, 8 were situated in Lääne- and Hiiumaa and 3 in Saaremaa (see: Eesti evangeeliumi... 1937); the Free congregations of the Estonian Swedes of Läänemaa had not joined the Association (EDERBERG 1935: 110). In 1934, Läänemaa also stood out by the greatest number of people officially not belonging to any confession – it was 1117 persons (EDERBERG 1935: 173).

It would seem that as the domination of Lutheranism weakened, the influence of the other religious communities among the believers of West Estonia remained strong and within the framework of the Free Church congregations there also survived the features characteristic of the Awakening of Läänemaa – occasionally occurring minor awakenings, manifestations of religious ecstasy, a more popular conception of Christianity. From the year 1940 onward, however, the whole religious life of Estonia underwent major change in connection with political events.

2. RELIGIOUS LIFE IN ESTONIA UNDER THE DOMINATION OF FOREIGN AUTHORITIES (1940 – THE END OF THE 1980S)

In June 1940, the Soviet Army occupied the territory of the Estonian Republic and it was annexed to the Soviet Union. The Soviet laws on religion and churches, enforced in 1929 and decreeing the suppression of the Church and religion as phenomena opposed to the official atheist ideology, took force in Estonia, too.

The new authorities set out to restrict the activities of churches and congregations in Estonia: the property of the congregations was nationalized and voluntary donations from members remained the only economical foundation for religious activities. Church wedding lost legal validity, religious instruction at schools was banned, religious publications were forbidden. The libraries of many congregations were destroyed. Child and youth education, diaconal and missionary work, and foreign relations were forbidden. Besides, the new authorities engaged in active antireligious propaganda and persecuted the clergy. From the very beginning of the occupation, the more outstanding religious activists of various movements began to disappear (KIIVIT 1995: 103–5).

The WW II entailed the occupation of Estonia by Germany, in 1941–1944. Even under wartime circumstances, the new foreign power brought some relief to the Estonian religious movements.

In 1944, about 70 000 Estonians, among them the greater part of the Estonian clergy, left their home country in order to escape from the advancing Soviet Army (KIIVIT 1995:

106). Almost all the Estonian Swedes left Läänemaa for Sweden and the Estonian Swedish congregations in Estonia ceased to be. After the reoccupation of Estonia by the USSR, arrests and deportations to Siberia in the families of the leading Estonian church activists who had stayed in Estonia continued till the 1950s.

The war had left its destructive marks upon many church buildings. A number of these remained vacant after the war and crumbled away or were taken into use as cowsheds, granaries, garages, etc., of the collective and state farms formed during that period. The buildings of the Orthodox Church are in a particularly sorry state up to the present: in Hiiumaa, for instance, only one Orthodox church and a small congregation continued working in 1997, and even then services were held only a couple of times a year, when a priest from Tallinn visited the island; the other two Orthodox churches stood in ruins.

The activities of the religious organizations of the Estonian SSR were regulated with the so-called "temporary directive" drawn up in 1945, which remained the legal foundation for the activities of churches and congregations until 1977 when it was replaced by a more detailed "Statute of Religious Organizations" aimed essentially at restricting congregational activities and specifying their obligations.

According to the directive of 1945, the congregations existing in Estonia had to be registered; registration could be applied for by at least 20 grown-up congregation members and permission to act was granted only to congregations which had a clergyman (parson, minister). This requirement forced congregations to fill the vacancies with unqualified people, since many of the clergy had fled from the country or been repressed. The EELC, for instance, had no more than 154 congregations and only 79 parsons and assistant clergymen left by the year 1948 (KIIVIT 1995: 108).

In 1945, a great part of the Estonian Free Churches (Baptists, Free Believers, Pentecostalists and other Free congregations) were forced to join into an alliance subordinated to the All-Union Council of the Evangelical Christians and Baptists seated in Moscow. Different authors have estimated that before occupation, as many as 15 000 members belonged to the Estonian Free Churches which made up the new alliance. In the post-war period, some 10 000 members were left in the joined congregations. During the Soviet period, several Russian congregations joined the alliance, too, but the number of members diminished. In 1989, the Evangelical Christian and Baptist Union of Estonia (subsequently ECBUE) with 80 congregations and about 5800 members was formed on the continuity of the previous alliance. By 1996, the ECBUE united 86 congregations with 6328 members, among them seven Russian-speaking congregations with about 800 members.

Independent activities were carried on during the Soviet period by the United Methodist Church in Estonia (subsequently UMCE); in Latvia and Lithuania, at the same time, Methodist churches were abolished. In 1940, the UMCE had 21 congregations with about 1600 full members. After the war, just 12 congregations continued work and membership had declined by almost 50 per cent. By 1990, the UMCE had 1748 full members. The Seventh-Day Adventists (subsequently SDA) also continued independently of other Estonian congregations; many denominations, however, were forced to stop their activities or worked on illegally.

In Soviet Estonia, religious life underwent a long period of decline which lasted till the end of the 1980s, although there were short-lived upsurges in some confessions. Thus, for instance, in some congregations of the ECBUE there even occurred sporadic bursts of awakening, but naturally these could not spread very wide under the general oppression (How... 1997).

After Stalin's death, in the years 1955–1958 the activities of churches and congregations in Estonia appeared to be normalizing again. The membership of the EELC, for instance, was growing, the number of the confirmed increased and was approaching the level achieved at the end of the 1930s (KIIVIT 1995: 109). But the liberalization to a certain extent of the internal policy of the Soviet Union during the second half of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s did not concern religious life. On the contrary, ideological repression of religion and surveillance of the religious grew even more severe. A campaign was launched to establish secular ceremonies, and membership of some denominations or visiting of their services could bring about serious complications in obtaining education or getting a job, a flat, etc. Also, the taxes exacted from the congregations were raised even higher.

From the beginning of the 1960s, the membership of most Estonian congregations, participation in the services and religious ceremonies began to fall rapidly. The same applies to the Lutheran Church, where in 1966 the number of baptisms fell by more than one fifth, the number of confirmations to five and of weddings to eight per cent of the respective numbers for 1958.

Bishop J. Kiivit suggests that the greater part of Estonians adjusted during that period and resigned themselves to the order and ideology enforced by the Soviet occupation authorities (KIIVIT 1995: 109–110). As a matter of fact, there are other reasons for the Estonians' growing indifference towards religion during the discussed period: first the general secularization of society – a 20th-century phenomenon characteristic not only of the socialist system – and naturally also the almost complete lack of contacts with the rest of the world and the impossibility of missionary activities in Estonia. Kiivit estimates that the lowest point in the activities of the Lutheran church was reached in the mid-1970s and the first signs of revival appeared only in the 1980s (KIIVIT 1995: 110). Obviously the same could be said about the other denominations active in Estonia and about West Estonia, too.

THE REVIVAL OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IN ESTONIA SINCE THE END OF THE 1980S

In the years 1987–1988 we can already speak about the beginning of the national re-awakening in Estonia largely inspired by the 'perestroika' in the Soviet Union. The search for a national identity and personal origins again brought the Estonian Lutheran Church into the focus of interest, increasing interest was felt for religion in general.

In December, 1987, the Estonian radio broadcast Christmas carols and for the first time after the war, the people were wished a merry Christmas over the state radio. The bolder ones began to attend church, either for curiosity or other reasons, and at least at

Christmas time the churches were packed full again for the first time over decades. Going to church became a fashion at the end of the 1980s, as well as being baptised and getting married at church. For many people, the discovering of a new field of life practically closed off during the Soviet rule certainly played a role here, too.

At the end of the 1980s, the number of EELC members and all kinds of church ceremonies grew considerably; the life of most of the other churches that had remained active in Estonia revived and many new members, mostly young people, joined the congregations. New denominations and religious movements began to spread, too, often introduced into Estonia by foreign missionaries. Wider attention was attracted by the "Word of Life" movement, the *Taara* and heathen movements trying to reconstruct a national religion close to the nature, and the so-called Satanists. As for the other non-Christian organizations and movements radically different from traditional Christianity, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Jewish and Islamic congregations, Baha'i congregation, Krishnaists, Buddhists and others were represented in Estonia by 1995. In addition to the above-mentioned ones, congregations of the Old Believers, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Armenian Apostolic Church are active in present-day Estonia, as well as the Association of the Estonian Evangelical Charismatic Congregations, the Association of the Estonian Full-Gospel Congregations, the Quakers, etc.

Greater freedom in the activities of various denominations was accompanied by the distributing of religious literature and religious education which had been forbidden during the Soviet period. At the end of the 1980s, we may even speak about a boom of religious literature.

After the restoration of the Republic of Estonia, in 1991, legislation on religious life had to be brought up to date, too. In 1990, the Board of Religion was created in order to regulate the relations between the state and religious associations. According to the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia, there is no established state church in Estonia, and the law of churches and congregations passed in 1993 decrees that each person has the right to freely choose, witness and profess his religious convictions.

Estonian religious organizations are legalized after they have been registered, and by the year 1995 about 500 religious associations or congregations had been entered in the church register.

After the opening years of the 1990s, wider public began to lose interest in different churches, denominations and religious movements. By the mid-1990s, the number of members of most Estonian churches and denominations had stabilized or even begun to decline.[3]

[3] A pretty good idea of the years of upsurge and decline during a period revolutionary for Estonia is offered by the reports of the EELC for the years 1987 (before the upsurge), 1991 (the culmination, perhaps already exhibiting a tendency towards decline: the absolutely greatest number of baptisms in the 20th century was achieved in 1990, namely 18361 persons), and 1995 (a certain decline and stabilization).

Year	Baptisms	Confirmations	Weddings	Burials	Donators
1987	1834	1179	307	3339	49354
1991	13382	8383	1243	5006	70209
1995	6727	4071	620	4965	55058

(KIIVIT 1995: 111)

The decline tendencies following the increase in the number of congregation members can be explained basically by a high mortality rate since the majority of church and congregation members are people advanced in years, the middle-aged ones having been denied access to religion by the Soviet regime. In many of the older congregations the majority of the members are old or else relatively young people. Quite a few new congregations have been formed in Estonia in the 1990s for the Russian-speaking population, too (e.g. the new congregations of the UMCE, the ECBUE).

The exact number and membership of all the religious organizations and movements active in present-day Estonia cannot be specified as yet, since part of the congregations have not yet registered (the greatest among them probably the Russian Orthodox Church in Estonia) and those which have are not required to present exact numbers of membership. The existing data of the Board of Religion quote 248 421 or about 16.6 per cent of the population as the total number of adherents to religious communities in Estonia in the year 1995. The number is highly approximate.[4]

Out of that 16.6 per cent, membership in the EELC accounts for 69.2 per cent;[5] members of the Estonian Apostolic Orthodox Church (subsequently EAOC) form 12.0 per cent (30 000 persons) and congregations of the ECBUE 2.6 per cent (6500 members) (HELLERMAA 1995).

RELIGIOUS LIFE IN WEST ESTONIA SINCE THE END OF THE 1980S

The above observations of the general trends in Estonian religious life after the year 1940 are valid also for Lääne-, Hiiu- and Saaremaa, where religious life underwent the same kind of high and low tides as elsewhere in Estonia. However, West Estonia has still retained its peculiarity, namely the relatively greater adherence of the population to various churches, congregations and religious movements than is usual in the other counties.

The results of field work made by the author in Läänemaa in 1996 and Hiiumaa in 1997, but also other sources (How... 1997) show that by the year 1997, the following congregations were active in the counties of West Estonia:

In Saaremaa there were 14 congregations of the EELC, 14 congregations of the EAOC, 9 congregations of the ECBUE; 4 UMCE, 1 Pentecostal, 1 SDA and one independent Christian congregation. All in all, there are 44 active Christian congregations in Saaremaa.

[4] The numbers presented by many of the congregations that had registered by the year in question appear to be very approximate and sometimes even overestimated. Some congregations have apparently also taken into account persons who may stand in the registers but do not actively participate in religious life. A considerable part of the 172 000 members of the EELC in 1995, for instance, are probably quite estranged from the activities of their congregations. Adopting the paying of church dues as a criterion of active membership we see that in 1995, the EELC received the church dues from 55 058 members.

[5] That is to say, Lutherans made up 11.5 per cent of the population of Estonia in 1995; in 1936, some 75 per cent of the population were formally registered in the books of the EELC (GNADENTEICH 1995: 102).

In Hiiumaa there were 11 ECBUE, 5 EELC, 2 independent free congregations and 1 Orthodox congregation, all in all 19 organized congregations. In addition to those, there were members of the Estonian Christian Pentecostal Church (ECPC) and reports of the activities, in the 1990s, of members of the Word of Life, SDA, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons and probably other movements, which, however, had not left particularly noticeable traces by the year 1997.

In Läänemaa there were 13 EELC, 10 ECBUE, 2 ECPC,1 EAOC, 1 SDA, 1 UMCE, 1 Full-Gospel and 1 independent Christian congregations, all in all 30 Christian congregations.

Furthermore, a small group of the members of the Estonian Brethren congregation survives in Läänemaa. Whereas in the mid-19th century Lääne- and Hiiumaa could boast of some 15 Brethren's chapels with almost 5000 members, the number (6–7) of the only remaining Brethren in Läänemaa and their venerable age do not give much hope for the future of this religious group. There are also a very few Urshanists remaining in Läänemaa.

There are also members of non-Christian movements acting in Läänemaa. One of the most conspicuous new religious groupings today is the congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses, having more than 60 preachers at present whose active missionary work and witnessing has given rise to negative feelings. Out of all the religious communities active in Estonia, it is the Jehovah's Witnesses who have earned the most negative attitudes among the inhabitants of Lääne- and Hiiumaa which is shared alike by believers and non-believers. The most positive attitudes of both the members of various sectarian congregations and non-believers, however, are reserved for the Lutheran Church.

In addition to all that, there is a shrine with stupas in Läänemaa, the founder of which is called 'the Buddhan', that is, Buddhist, by his neighbours; according to his own opinion, he witnesses the 'faith of the immense'.

The doctrines and rituals characteristic of the earlier awakening movements persisted within the framework of West Estonian Baptist and Free Churches all through the Soviet period up to the present day.

As before, the greatest ECBUE congregation in Läänemaa is the Baptist Congregation of Ridala which has developed from the Ridala Free Believers' congregation founded in 1882. In the 1930s, the Ridala Baptist Church had over 700 members (BUSCH 1928). During the Soviet period the number of members decreased gradually. The church experienced a new rise only in 1988 when the number of members grew from 43 to more than 100; at present, there are ninety-odd members there.

Most of the former Free Believers have adopted not only the name, but also the better balanced religious views of the Baptists. The vivid and emotional spirit of the one-time great awakenings is nowadays kept alive in Läänemaa by various new congregations of the Pentecostal character founded there at the end of the 1980s and beginning of 1990s.

The greatest among the latter is the Full-Gospel Free congregation comprising more than 60 members and meeting at least twice a week; the meetings are noteworthy for the speaking in tongues, healing with hands, exorcism, falling down and the praising of God with cheerful song and witnessing to God's miraculous deeds.

Considering the West Estonian congregations, we can see that compared to the rest

of Estonia, the number of Orthodox congregations is still great in Saaremaa, whereas the ECBUE congregations are numerous all over the region. The situation has been pretty much the same ever since the Awakening of Läänemaa in the last quarter of the previous century. In 1997, as many as 32 of the 89 congregations of the ECBUE were located in Saane-, Hiiu- and Läänemaa (How... 1997).

The counties of Western Estonia rank first in Estonia as to the number of Christian congregations per number of inhabitants. According to a research made by the Estonian Evangelical Alliance (EEA), Lääne- and Hiiumaa had more evangelical congregations and working points per population than any other Estonian county; Hiiu- and Läänemaa were the only counties having 1 evangelical congregation or working point for less than 1000 people[6] (in Hiiumaa, 1 for every 584, in Läänemaa for every 959 inhabitants). Saaremaa ranked fourth in Estonia with 1 congregation or working point for every 1164 inhabitants; however, had the 14 EAOC congregations of Saaremaa been taken into account, too, Saaremaa would have stayed second only to Hiiumaa as to its number of Christian congregations/working points (764). In all other counties, the number of inhabitants per one congregation/working point was much higher (see: How... 1997).

In 1996, the author of the present paper did field work in five parishes of Läänemaa which had been centres of the historical religious movements discussed previously. A random selection of more than 200 (and older than 18 years) inhabitants of Läänemaa were questioned; 19.2 per cent of them belonged to various religious organizations and 33.2 per cent admitted that they were believers.

A similar research made in Hiiumaa in 1997 proved that in the two examined parishes (which were also centres of old religious movements), 17.1 per cent of the random selection were members of some congregation or church, whereas 25 per cent of the selection considered themselves religious.[7]

Lutherans made up the majority of the members of various religious movements in both counties – 17 per cent of the selection in Läänemaa and 12 per cent in Hiiumaa; the percentage of adherents to other confessions did not rise over 2.

Proceeding from these data we can say that even though the number of different Christian congregations in West Estonia is still comparatively greater than elsewhere in the country and most of them have experienced a certain revival during the last decade, the general proportion of believers has considerably decreased as compared to the 1920s and 1930s. Presuming that these counties are still relatively most receptive to religion in

[6] Thereby, the EEA research recognized as 'evangelical' the congregations of EELC, ECBUE, UMCE, ECPC, the Association of Full-Gospel Congregations, the Association of Christian Free Congregations, the Association of Evangelical Charismatic Congregations, and certain independent congregations which could be regarded, in the opinion of EEA, as preaching the Gospels. Thus, the congregations of EAOC, the Old Believers, the Catholics, the Adventists and other Christians were left out, as well as the congregations not recognized as Christian ones.

[7] Following are the numbers for the same parishes of Hiiumaa in 1922: in Käina parish, 81.5 per cent of the total population were Lutherans, 8.0 per cent Orthodox, 6.2 per cent Baptists, 2.3 per cent members of other movements and 0.6 per cent non-believers; religion was unknown in 1.0 per cent of the cases. In Emmaste parish, 70.5 per cent of the population were Lutherans, 4.5 per cent Orthodox, 13.9 per cent Baptists, 7.2 per cent members of other movements; 1.4 per cent were non-believers and in 2.3 per cent of the cases religion was unknown (1922. a. ...1924).

Estonia, it seems that the role of different religious movements in Estonia has grown rather insignificant despite the temporary flourishing at the turn of the 1980s–1990s. A further decline in the numbers of West Estonian religious groupings can be prognosticated for the next few years, considering the relatively advanced age of the majority of their members. The young, however, are attracted to new congregations and movements which offer perhaps the same kind of intense and fresh religious experiences as did the one-time great awakening movements in West Estonia in their hey-day in the 18th and 19th centuries.

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CO-EXISTENCE AND CONFLICTS EVERYDAY LIFE OF A LAY RELIGIOUS CONFRATERNITY

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My paper deals with one aspect of the operation and everyday activity in the 19th–20th centuries of the confraternity of the rosary, widely known among Roman Catholics: I would like to speak about the co-operation with ecclesiastical and secular authorities and the conflicts of this co-existence. In short, about the everyday operation of a form of religious practice conducted within an organized, institutionalized frame.

Although the actual rosary, as an object, is regarded as uniquely characteristic of Catholics, similar means for counting prayers can also be found in other religions.[1] According to the Catholic legend, the Virgin Mary herself gave the rosary to Saint Dominic in the 13th century.[2] Forms of its use in a communal frame are known from the last third of the 15th century.[3] There are records of rosary confraternities in Hungary too from the end of the 15th century.[4] The basic structure of the rosary remained essentially the same: 150 Ave Marias, 15 Pater Nosters and three times five, that is 15 mysteries taken from sacred history. In different periods and places, other prayers could also be associated with these, giving rise to the various forms of rosary devotion. This 800-year-old prayer underwent numerous changes in the course of history, but was always capable of renewal.[5]

One such renewal can be dated to 1826 when Jean-Maria Jaricot, a French woman from Lyons, initiated the formation of 15-member prayer groups corresponding to the number of mysteries.[6] In this way, each sacred mystery was said simultaneously in the group and so this kind of rosary was made living according to Madame Jaricot. With episcopal and papal support, this form of confraternity spread rapidly from the 1830s in Austria, Germany and Hungary. One of the first Hungarian parent confraternities (archiconfraternitas) is known to have operated in Győr (North-west Hungary) from 1843. From then on the confraternity spread rapidly in Hungary and between 1885 and 1945 also published its own periodical. Many prayer books were published for the members.[7]

[1] RADÓ 1961: 488–492; KLINKHAMMER 1981: 473–507; LÉVAY 1934: 229–255; VEREBÉLYI 1983.
[2] BÁLINT 1977: 152.; RITZ o. J.
[3] GELENIUS 1975: 102–108; KÜFFNER 1975: 109–117.
[4] BÁLINT 1977: 367.
[5] BARNA 1991a.
[6] ANGELICA, Sch(wester) 1918.
[7] BARNA 1991a.

On the basis of the situation in Hungary today, the fieldwork material (interviews) and data in the rosary periodical, I tried to find an explanation for why this form of society spread so rapidly. I hypothesized that the transformation of Hungarian society in the late 19th century created new demands in religious life and so a new frame, forms new also in content, and new social roles were required in religious practice. And the new type of rosary confraternity must have corresponded to these demands very well, being a form able to link the horizontally organized confraternity with the vertically organized church.

My paper seeks an answer to this working hypothesis, largely on the basis of analysis of the records of a single society, the Living Rosary Confraternity of town Kunszentmárton which was formed in 1851, kept its minute-books with care up to 1940, and still functions, as well as interviews conducted in recent times in different parts of Hungary, the national periodical *Rózsafüzér Királynéja* (Queen of the Rosary), and the religious literature of the rosary (prayer books, confraternity publications).[8] As this research is still under way, I am able to report on only partial results.[9]

THE ROSARY CONFRATERNITY IN EVERYDAY RELIGIOUS LIFE

Only a Eucharistic Confraternity had operated in Kunszentmárton before the establishment of the rosary confraternity. The former had been banned together with the other religious societies in 1783 by the rule of enlightened absolutism. A funeral society was formed in the 1830s and a choral society in 1845. This means that the religious society, as a form, existed but covered only a very limited stratum of the population of this market town which consisted mainly of peasants and guild tradesmen.[10]

The rosary confraternity was built on these precedents.

It was in Máriaradna (now in Romania), a place of pilgrimage at the edge of the Great Plain,[11] that the people of Kunszentmárton came into contact with the new, confraternity form of rosary devotion. The time was a distinctive historical period: Whitsun 1851. After the defeat in August 1849 of the Hungarian revolution and war of independence – the 150th anniversary of which we are now celebrating – it was then that the Habsburg government once again allowed greater freedom of assembly, including pilgrimages. It was thus in a special state of mind that the people of Kunszentmárton went on pilgrimage to Máriaradna: with injured national sentiments and heightened religious spiritual need. This special psychological situation may also have been a factor in the great enthusiasm with which they embraced the new prayer confraternity form.[12]

[8] BARNA 1996: 291–292.

[9] Since 1998 the project on confraternities is supported by the OTKA (the National Scientific Research Fund).

[10] DÓSA–SZABÓ 1936.

[11] BARNA 1991b.

[12] Minute-book 3–9. In the possession of the parish archives.

Briefly, this form means that a 15-member group is organized and the members simultaneously pray 5 joyful, 5 glorious and 5 sorrowful mysteries from the life of Jesus, then exchange these mysteries each month. It is because of this simultaneous prayer that this rosary is regarded as "living".[13]

Another reason why this form of confraternity was so popular could have been that it broke the large community of religious society down into small communities that the individual could grasp and, at the same time, through them also incorporated the individual into the larger community. In the first year, 1851/1852, separate groups for men and women were organized, but from 1852 the organization of mixed groups which functioned for decades can be traced. However, from the early 20th century the rosary increasingly became a female devotion and confraternity although, even in the mid-20th century, its leaders were men. This structural change reflects the image of a patriarchal society. In this society the needs for social guidance and the resolution of social tensions differ by gender. There is a greater demand for this in women than in men. Differing patterns of socialization are to be found behind this. Women's socialization is of a much more strongly communal nature than that of men. This provides an explanation for the role mentioned above: there were many men among the leaders of the women's confraternities in the 20th century, too.[14]

Although I have only just begun to analyse the confraternity membership records, it seems to me that the society linked two traditional principles of the horizontal organization of society into its own organization: the ties of kinship and the local principle. In the 19th century the 15-member groups were largely organized on the basis of kinship and neighbourhood. By joining forces, these groups could form an even larger frame. The ordinary members could belong to this larger community frame through the group leader whose person ensured and maintained the network of informal ties among the different groups. Family participation in the rosary confraternity must have reinforced family links and family emotional ties. Through this confraternity too, the individual was integrated into the larger town/parish community.

In the years following its establishment, the framework formed in this way, "the Confraternity", practically took over certain forms, venues and occasions of religious life.

It was able to do so because 1. its operation meant that it undertook a large part of church patronage, 2. because it set clear, transparent and easily performed tasks, 3. it required of its members a feasible co-ordination of individual and collective religious practice. In the frame of individual religious practice this meant the "rosary ten", that is, praying 10 Ave. The space and time structure for this was flexible: the prayers could be said at any time and anywhere, even during work. This placed emphasis on intimacy in prayer, which is an important requirement of individual religious practice.

The confraternity members perform individual devotions simultaneously with (many) others. The rosary thus went together with the awareness of belonging to a larger

[13] MARTON n.d.
[14] BÁLINT 1942.

community. When the mysteries were exchanged and on festive occasions of confraternity life, the prescribed devotions were performed in a community frame and the members participated collectively at public religious services, particularly in the processions. Forms of Christian solidarity also appeared in their religious practice: they undertook to perform devotions in place of deceased or sick members until a new member entered the confraternity.

It could be an explanation of its popularity that it requires of its members clearly formulated tasks that are performed by anyone without difficulty. These are tasks which can be performed easily by men and women, children and elderly persons, healthy and sick, civil servant, tradesman and agricultural labourer, layman and priest. And the measurable performance also held out the promise of reward: the indulgence linked to the rosary object and devotion.

In addition to individual and collective prayer, caring for the places of communal religious practice was an important task of the rosary confraternity. This meant first of all permanent patronage in the form of maintenance, care, equipment and cleaning of the communal places of religious practice, which can be seen as a typically modern form of alms-giving. The church had to be supplied with liturgical objects and equipment, and decorated with flowers. The material symbols of the confraternity (crucifix, banner, portable statue of Mary, candle, images of the stations of the Cross, rosary pictures) added to the pomp of public religious services (masses, processions, funerals, pilgrimages). These objects were ordered from Pest, Vienna and Graz[15] and besides outward show, they served as symbolical material manifestations of the group awareness. They must have reinforced and maintained a corporate consciousness. No doubt it was because of this patronage that the parish priests supported the operation of the rosary confraternity.[16]

The function of outward show served by these objects expanded the communal role undertaken by the rosary confraternity. Their use increased the solemnity of many occasions of communal religious practice. In this connection, the demand arose for the rosary confraternity to set up its own funeral society with a two-fold purpose. One aim was to assist the survivors of deceased members with material assistance and a contribution to the costs of the funeral, and another, for which there was a big social demand, was to add to the pomp of funerals through participation by singers of the rosary confraternity and use of the confraternity's symbols – crucifix, banners, candles and large rosary. The funeral society was formed with the authorization of the parish priest and the chief administrative officer of the county, and functioned until the middle of the 20th century, even in the first decades of the communist regime.

These must also have acted to increase awareness: the ordinary members could see how their singers, daughters of Mary (who carried the banners and statue of Mary in processions) and group leaders were esteemed. They could see from their own experience that the church was more beautiful, the procession more splendid and spectacular.

[15] Minute-book e.g. 68, 75–82, 83 and passim
[16] Minute-book 4.

The confraternity organized the pilgrimages. According to entries in the minute-books, in the 1850s the Radna pilgrimage confraternity was merged into the rosary confraternity. From then on, with the authorization of the town's secular and ecclesiastical leaders, they collected donations each year for the Radna pilgrimages. These funds were used to assist their poorer members and to have common masses said.[17] The confraternity also played an active role in the introduction and cultivation of new events in religious life, such as the Calvary procession held late in the evening on Good Friday (1854), and the procession to statues of Mary standing in public places made on feasts of the Virgin Mary.[18]

The rosary confraternity played a big role in the purchase, publication and distribution of religious printed materials. More and more people in the town ordered and purchased such materials, even though they also continued to use the manuscript song and prayer books.[19]

The right blend of these functions and communal roles, and the acceptable proportion of individual and collective practice led to the point where, in the last decade of the 19th century, one sixth to one fifth of the town's population belonged to the rosary confraternity. Practically every family was represented in the confraternity.

However, a comparison of the membership lists and surveys shows that in practice it was rather the middle and lower strata which took part in the life of the confraternity and in this form of religious practice. The upper strata, from civil servants to larger landowners, hardly participated at all. This was a constant cause of complaint against Kunszentmárton on the occasion of visits by the archdeacon.[20] We can see here the opposition between the elite and the people, the difference in religious practice of the two strata in a local community. This confraternity frame seems to have offered its members and leaders a possible form and path of social advancement. At the same time it also meant (social, secular, ecclesiastical) legitimation of the existing order. Participation as a family in the rosary confraternity must have strengthened family ties and emotional bonds.

As an organization built horizontally, intertwining part of the life of society, together with other organizations of a similar structure the rosary confraternity proved suitable for repeatedly restructuring and reorganizing communal ties and thereby establishing a degree of social stability. The festive occasions of confraternity patronage – blessing of a new crucifix, banner, etc. – are symbolic expressions of this stability. The parish priest generally also invited the town's political leaders to attend these church occasions, linking the horizontal and vertical planes of social organization.

However, there is a characteristic duality in the way both the secular and the ecclesiastical authorities, possessing a hegemony of power, wished to exercise varying degrees of control over the operation of the confraternity. This took the form of authorizing its operation, exercising annual control of its financial affairs, and giving ad hoc approval of

[17] BARNA 1991b; Minute-book, passim.
[18] Minute-book, passim.
[19] Cf. the journal of the Living Rosary: *Rózsafüzér Királynéja*, Queen of the Rosary, published 1885–1945.
[20] Archepiscopial Church Archives, Eger 586.

its patronage. The town council, as the patron of the local Roman Catholic church, on occasion qualified certain meetings as contrary to the rules and declared their resolutions invalid.

EVERYDAY CONFLICTS

The confraternity organizational form was also suitable for dealing appropriately with the conflicts that occasionally arose between the believers and the clergy, between confraternity members and town authorities, and for reaching compromises. There were always conflicts.

In 1853 the newly formed confraternity was the target of slander and some members departed. The accusations: "fancy prayer", "new invention", "invention of the priests", "they pray for the Germans" – this is a manifestation of the strong national sentiment following the defeat of the war of independence – "it was the idea only of the singers (=most of the organizers and leaders of the confraternity)".[21] Complaints were also made to the parish priest. The priest's explanations from the pulpit concerning the rosary confraternity were taken to mean the disappearance of the confraternity.[22] Disputes arose within the confraternity concerning the authorization or ban on the lighting of candles beside the dead.[23] For the sake of the poorer members of the confraternity the leadership was in favour of imposing a ban on this custom which was regarded as outward show, but it was unable to do anything in face of the rapid spread of the custom which soon became a compulsory norm.

The scattered farms *(tanya)* around the town sprang up in the 1860s. In 1869 members living "in the *puszta*" (= on farms) were excluded from the narrower leadership of the confraternity since the poor transport prevented them from taking part in the activity of the leadership. According to the minute-books, the technical solution of the "exchange of mysteries" was a quite frequent problem. For this reason, even in the 1870s the treasurer still gave explanations and guidance on the first Sunday of the month.[24]

During its initial dynamic development the rosary confraternity played a strong integrating role, incorporating other confraternities. This happened to the pilgrimage confraternity. However, in 1876 the "Sacred Heart Confraternity" was formed in Kunszentmárton and also wished to hold its own new moon Sunday devotions in the church. The rosary confraternity opposed this and brought the dispute to the parish priest for decision, with the request that he authorize the communal devotion of the Sacred Heart Society for the second Sunday of the month. There were only a few cases of dispute over financial matters within the confraternity.[25] Occasionally the *confraternity servants* (who delivered the confraternity's messages and mail) requested a wage increase, but this was always

[21] Minute-book 35.
[22] Minute-book 35.
[23] Minute-book 36.
[24] Minute-book 95.
[25] Minute-book 100.

refused because there was always a member who was ready to undertake the task for the same money or even "to the glory of God" without pay.[26] Perhaps this example, too, shows how important the membership of the confraternity was at that time for social prestige: people were even prepared to do unpaid work for it.

The confraternity took over many forms and frames of religious practice. It became involved in conflicts because of this too. As soon as some other interest or group tried to appear in the field they dominated, it immediately came into conflict with the interests of the rosary confraternity. This is the reason why the confraternity was unable to tolerate anyone taking part in church patronage without its knowledge and authorization and outside the frames of the confraternity. There are entries in the minute-book declaring that they do not allow the use in confraternity communal feasts (processions) of procession banners made by non-members but with the permission of the parish priest. They could not ban them from the church because that was the competence of another (ecclesiastical) authority, but the confraternity firmly insisted that liturgical objects made by outsiders could not be used in forms of religious practice it organized (first Sunday mass, processions, pilgrimages, litanies).

The Kunszentmárton confraternity joined the Győr archconfraternity which had been formed in 1843. They sent their membership lists to Győr. A copy of their admission document has also survived.[27] However, I have not yet found any trace of the confraternity's official state registration. The first reference to this is made in 1856 and trace of it can be found from 1859 in the minute-book recording control by the town council of the confraternity's finances. The last council countersignature I have found dates from 1913.[28]

Religious life in Kunszentmárton underwent change in the decades between the two world wars. The Romanian occupation of the Eastern part of the Great Plain and then its annexation to Romania made the pilgrimages to Radna impossible. This organizing role of the rosary confraternity gradually disappeared.[29] Local society also became more articulated. The primary role of religion and the church in organizing and integrating society was greatly reduced. In 1940 the Carmelite order settled in Kunszentmárton. Together with this, a new, rival form of confraternity, the scapular confraternity, also became popular.[30] However, the events of the Second World War and the communist rule that followed prevented organic development.

From 1948 confraternity life was characterized by hiding. The confraternity was forced into private life and the ghetto of church life. In 1946–1949 the communist state banned and dissolved the religious societies. The ban did not directly affect the rosary confraternity which had by then retreated largely into prayer life, but the hostile social atmosphere led to a drastic decline in its membership. The confraternity withdrew from the public religious services. Its life was restricted entirely within the frames of individual religious practice, but it has survived here right up to the present.

[26] Minute-book, passim
[27] Minute-book 91, 183 and Protocol 1872.
[28] Minute-book 194.
[29] BARNA 1991b.
[30] JÓZSA 1991.

A FEW CONCLUSIONS

At the time of its establishment in the 19th century, the living rosary confraternity was one of the most important organizers of religious life. As a horizontally structured organization, it embraced the greater part of Catholic society and proved suitable for the restructuring and reorganization of community relations and thereby contributed to a certain degree of social stability. However, neither the ecclesiastical not the secular authorities wanted to renounce control and influence over the organization at that time.

It seems to me important that the confraternity and its members had an awareness of modernity. This was manifested both in the minute-books and in the frequent references to novelty made in the confraternity's printed literature. The same spirit was found in the confraternity press which caused many changes in the mentality of the members.

This initial dynamism may have been strengthened by the circumstance that the confraternity members were aware that they belonged to a Hungarian archconfraternity and, through this, to an international system of relations. The internationalism was strengthened by the fact that the journal *Rózsafüzér Királynéja* regularly published news from abroad, especially from Lourdes.[31]

Around the turn of the century other organizations of a similar structure appeared beside the rosary confraternity. In the 20th century, especially from the middle of the century, the rosary confraternity increasingly lost ground and became a prayer society of middle-aged and elderly women. This meant that its original function acquired greater emphasis. The young people were attracted to other organizations and the demand for outward show in religion declined or it was forbidden. Other forms of aid and show at funerals emerged. After 1988 the Carmelites again returned to Kunszentmárton.[32] The Carmelite third order was reorganized, mainly with elderly members. The charismatic communities integrated many young people. The rosary confraternity had its banner renewed and placed in the church again. Its elderly members participate in the pilgrimages organized by the priest. Every 5–10 years they also visit Máriaradna. But the role they play in religious life has been reduced to a minimum and their role in patronage has also become insignificant, although they help to clean the church.

However, it is possible that a study of their history in the 19th–20th centuries and the social roles they undertook, illustrated with historical examples, could be an important contribution to a better understanding of the current rapid spread of religious communities, their operation and social context, throwing light on the general and specific characteristics.

[31] See the monthly periodical *Rózsafüzér Királynéja* (Queen of the Rosary)
[32] JÓZSA 1991.

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RÓZSAFÜZÉR KIRÁLYNÉJA

KÉPES HAVI FOLYÓIRAT
A RÓZSAFÜZÉR TÁRSULATOK
HIVATALOS LAPJA.

LIV. ÉVF. 1. SZ. ~ *Szerkeszti: P. Szakács Szaniszló O. P.* ~ 1938 JÁN.

Üdvösség esztendeje

P. Szakács Szaniszló O. P.

BÁR A GONDVISELŐ Isten terveiben minden egyes évnek megvan a maga jelentősége, mégis vannak esztendők, amelyek jelentőségben magasan kiemelkednek a többi évek közül. Ez a megállapítás érvényes az egyesek életére, de érvényes a népek és nemzetek nagy életére is.

A magyar katolicizmus olyan esztendőnek a küszöbén áll, amilyen nemzeti és vallási életben még nem volt. Egy méreteiben és feladataiban egyaránt óriási eucharisztikus kongresszust fog lebonyolítani. Ekkora lehetőségek talán még soha nem nyíltak, ilyen kedvező alkalom a magyar katolicizmusnak még soha nem volt, mint az idén. Pár napig a világ érdeklődésének a homlokterében állunk, a nagyvilág szeme — nemcsak a katolikusoké — rajtunk fog csüngeni.

Most a mi kongresszusunk feladatai valóban nagyok. Ebből a kongresszusból kell annak a mozgalomnak megszületnie, amely hivatva van békésebb viszonyt teremteni Európa békétlen, szétszabdalt népei között. Egy mélyebb, lelkibb alapra fektetni a népek egymáshoz való viszonyát, a szeretet kötelékét fűzni köréjük, azét a szeretetét, amelyet a Gyermek hozott a földre, azét a szeretetét, amely az eucharisztiában élő valóság.

Ebből az eucharisztikus kongresszusból kell kiindulni annak a mozgalomnak, amely milliónyi tömegeket tud fegyverbe szólítani, hogy letörje a harcos hitetlenség hadbaszállását Isten és Krisztus ellen.

1

Fig. 1. Monthly journal of the Living Rosary Confraternity

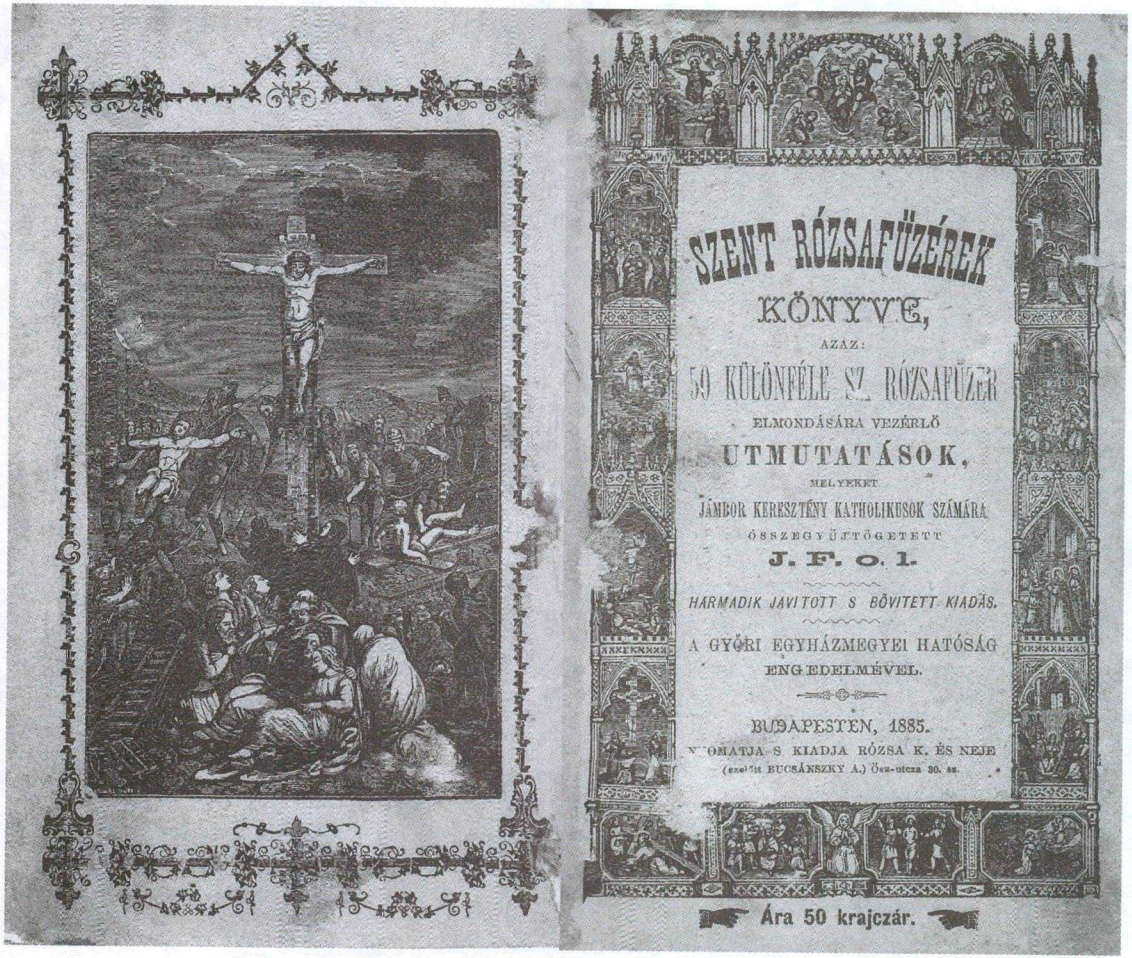


Fig. 2. Front pages of "The Book of Holy Rosaries"

Fig. 3. Description of the Living Spiritual Rosary in the "The Book of Holy Rosaries"

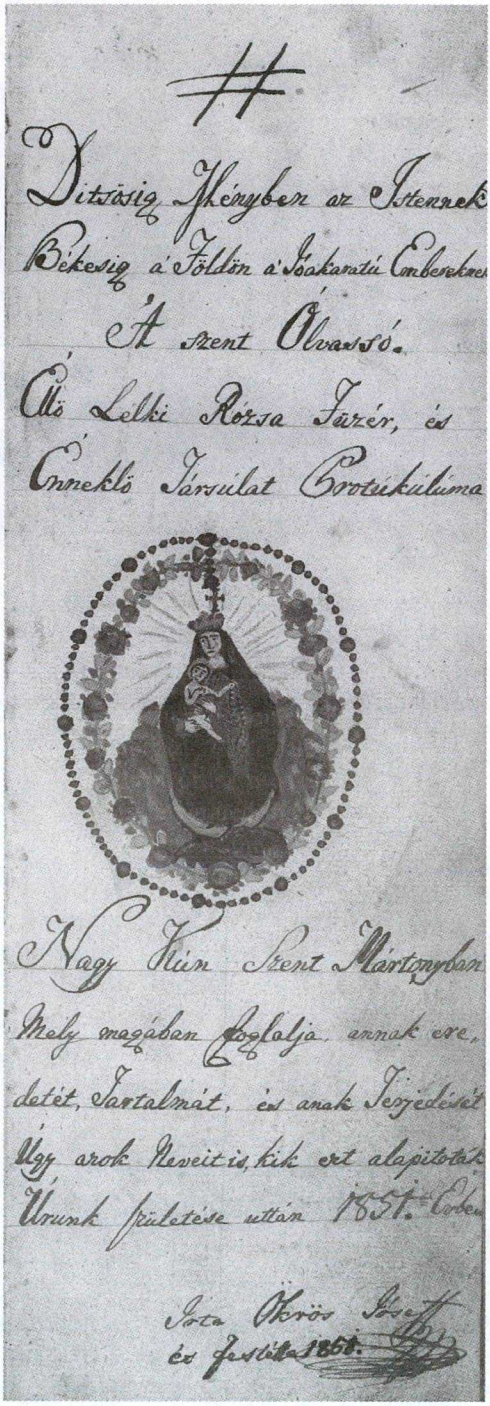
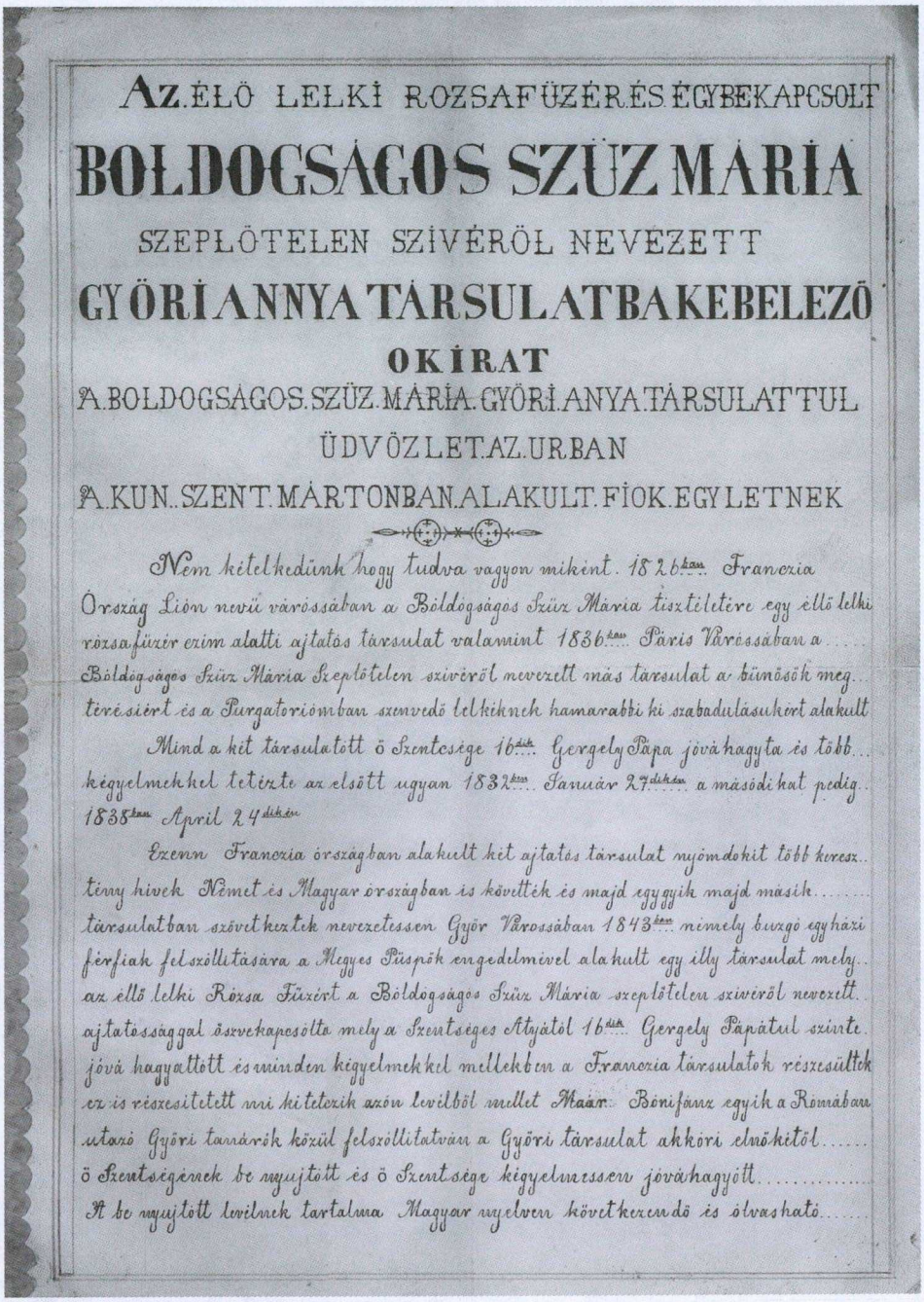


Fig. 4. Title page of the minute-book of the Living Rosary Confraternity in Kunszentmárton



AZ ÉLŐ LELKI ROZSAFÜZÉR ÉS EGYBEKAPCSOLT

BOLDOGSÁGOS SZÜZ MÁRIA

SZEPLŐTELEN SZÍVÉRŐL NEVEZETT

GYŐRI ANNYA TÁRSULATBA KEBELEZŐ

OKÍRAT

A BOLDOGSÁGOS SZÜZ MÁRIA GYŐRI ANYA TÁRSULAT TUL

ÜDVÖZLET AZ URBAN

A KUN SZENT MÁRTONBAN ALAKULT FIÓK EGYLETNEK

Nem kételkedünk hogy tudva vagyon miként. 1826kan Francziaországban Lion nevü várossában a Boldogságos Szüz Mária tisztületére egy élő lelki rózsafüzér czim alatti ajtatos társulat valamint 1836kan Páris Várossában a Boldogságos Szüz Mária Szeplőtelen szivéről nevezett más társulat a bünösök megtérésiért és a Purgatoriomban szenvedő lelkeknek hamarabbi kiszabadulásukért alakult

Mind a két társulatott ő Szentsége 16dik Gergely Papa jóvá hagyta és több kegyelmekkel tetézte az elsött ugyan 1832kan Január 27dikén a másodikat pedig 1838kan April 24dikén

Ezenn Francziaországban alakult két ajtatos társulat nyomdokit több keresztény hivek Német és Magyar országban is követték és majd egyik majd másik társulatban szövetkeztek nevezetessen Győr Várossában 1843kan némely buzgó egyházi férfiak felszólitására a Megyes Püspök engedelmével alakult egy illy társulat mely az élő lelki Rózsa Füzért a Boldogságos Szüz Mária szeplőtelen szivéről nevezett ajtatossággal összekapcsolta mely a Szentséges Atyától 16dik Gergely Pápától szinte jóvá hagyattott és minden kegyelmekkel mellekben a Francziai társulatok részesültek ez is részesitetett mi kitetszik azon levélből mellet Maár Bónifacz egyik a Rómában utazó Győri tanárok közül felszólittatván a Győri társulat akkori elnökitől ő Szentségének be nyujtott és ő Szentsége kegyelmessen jóváhagyott

A be nyujtott levélnek tartalma Magyar nyelven következendő és olvasható

Fig. 5. Authorization act of the Living Rosary Confraternity in Kunszentmárton for the archconfraternity in Győr

THE IMAGE OF THE OTHER WORLD IN A PEASANT BIBLE PARAPHRASE (BORBÁLA SZANYI MIKÓ'S "ETERNAL GOSPEL")

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I acquired the hand-written booklet, a so-called "igésfüzet" that provided the basis for my presentation in the autumn of 1992. I was gathering data for the analysis of a peasant pious society during a fieldtrip in Nagydobrony, Ukraine.

Nagydobrony is the biggest Hungarian village of Kárpátalja (Subcarpathian Area) it belongs to the district of Ungvár, and it has a population over 5000 people. Most of the inhabitants of Nagydobrony belong to the Calvinist Church.

The hand-written Bible paraphrase, or the "Notebook of the Word" (igésfüzet), presented here is the property of former members of what the people of Nagydobrony[1] refer to as the "Erdősi" congregation. The thirty–forty-member peasant ecclesiola was invited by a local peasant woman, Borbála Szanyi Mikó who was 41 at that time. The prophet woman – so I was told – was ordered by heavenly visions to form a congregation around her to transmit a heavenly message to.

Owners of these notebooks regard the pious script as of immediate heavenly origin and they think of it as a continuation of the Bible.

Their ideas about the author and the origin of the work also support this: According to these ideas Borbála Szanyi Mikó, leader of the congregation, received heavenly visions in a state of trance regularly during a period of 12 years (from the age of 41 until her death in 1950). The manuscript is the result of visions and heavenly teachings that the prophet woman noted down immediately and conveyed to the earthly world, to the members of the congregation.[2] Thus the prophet woman who led the congregation, the person chosen by the heavenly world, is not the author but only the transmitter (mediator) of the next of the paraphrase.

Although so far I have identified neither the author nor the origin of the manuscript, it can be proved that it comes from one or more literate persons who have some knowledge of theology, who are well-acquainted with the Bible, and in preparing the text they have been at least partially motivated by the intention to criticise the institutional church structure and its priests. This intention is demonstrated by the relationship between the

[1] I do not discuss here earlier studies of Hungarian peasant ecclesiolae. Ambrus MOLNÁR 1986: 418–443, Jenő SZIGETI 1986: 444–478.

[2] Similar activities were performed at the same time by Mariska Borku in the nearby Tiszaágtelek. Her followers attribute another similar Bible paraphrase, the "Lett-Szövetség", to her. KÜLLŐS 1991: 346–349.

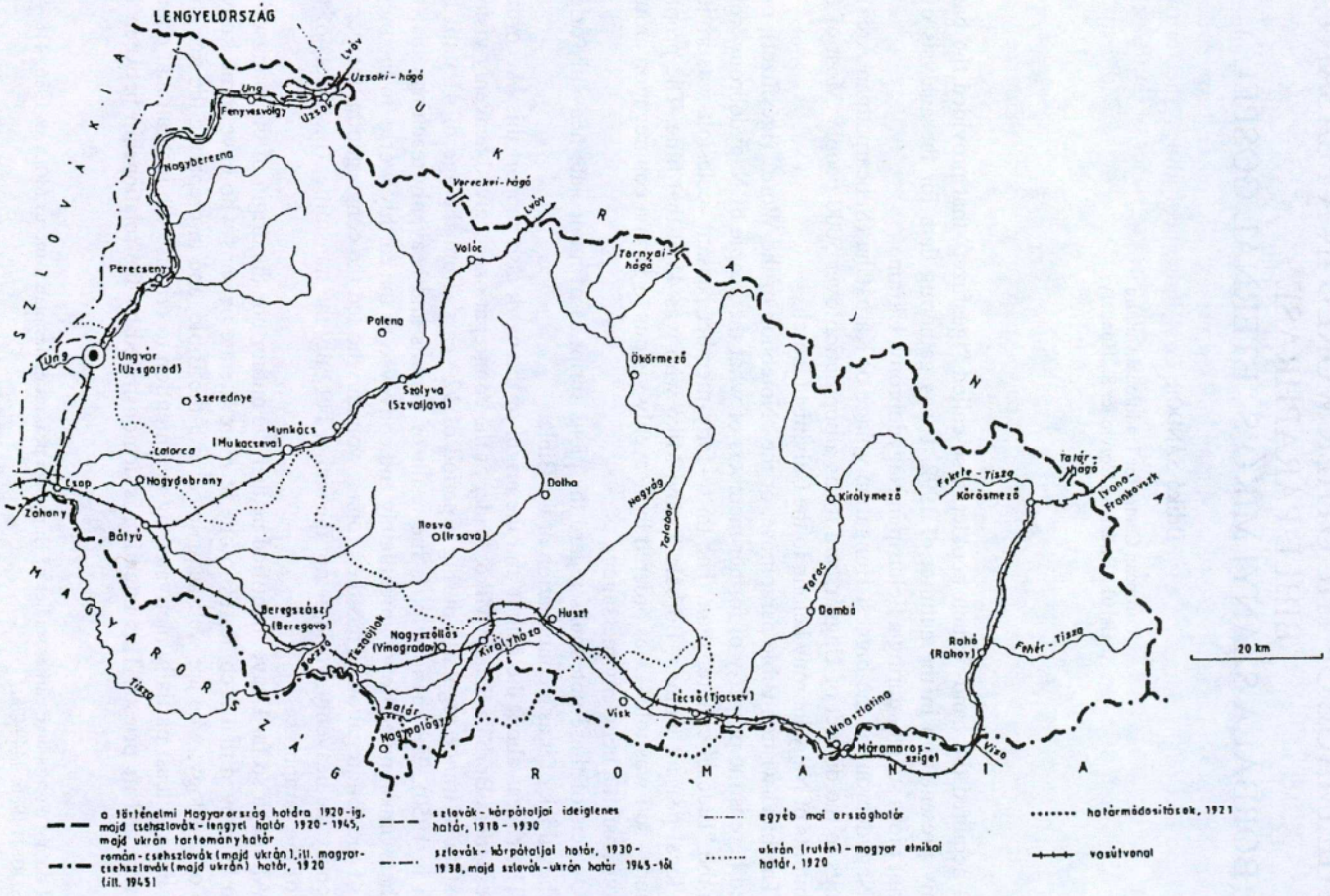

Fig. 1. Map of Subcarpathean Area.

core-text and the corresponding Bible references which often focuses on the contrast between good and bad pastors, and between true and false prophets.

The formal model of the Notebook of the Word is the Bible, or as the believers say *it has been introduced* in the Bible. Bible reference locations are marked in the text, and the Notebook of the Word itself is divided into numbered verses.[3] The other theme around which the text of the paraphrase is organised is the Last Judgement told in the form of heavenly visions and spiritual trips. The paraphrase adopts several verses of the Revelations of St. John (for example 2:23, 6:9, 10:7, 21:1–2) unchanged, and we find a somewhat looser connection between the two texts even more frequently:

"And I saw a great light shining, and in the light I saw several candles placed in candlesticks, and each lit the place where it stood. And a man was walking between them." – which relates to the Revelations 1:12–13.

The manuscript contains 16 shorter and longer visions of the world which describe experiences phrased in the first person singular. The narrator has lived through the events and this fortifies their credibility.

> *"10.*[4] *And then the Angel of the Lord appeared for me, and took my spirit with him, and he put me down at the side of a big river and said to me.*
>
> *What is what you see and I say that I see a tall and well-kept fruit tree. And several green branches on it.*
>
> *And again he says what is that you see under the tree?*
>
> *And I say that I see many snakes, and all kinds of ugly creatures that all try to go up the tree but they always fall back.*
>
> *And he says there are many who try but never reach the branches because their minds are in the dark. These are the ones for whom the dimness of the dark is reserved.*
>
> *You, servant girl of the Lord, as you have seen those ugly creatures trying to go up the tree, the same way do your enemies want to convince you. But do not be afraid of them, because I, the Lord have convinced them.*
>
> *Speak to them like this.*
>
> *The many will do away with our enemies."*

Different types of texts follow each other in the manuscript: pieces of text that the believers refer to as "Words" and which consist of descriptions of visions, heavenly teachings and proclamations, and texts of prayers and songs. Besides these, I have access to another type of source from among members of the very same community: personal belief-stories told as their trip to the other world.

What follows here is an analysis and comparison of the motifs of oral and written visions and stories of the other world.

[3] The copy of Borbála Vinda is a checked school notebook in which the Words form 110 pages numbered from 1 to 117 continuously, and from then on numbered again from 1 to 9.The 24 prayers and 28 songs inserted in between Words have been copied into a separate notebook.

[4] Numbers belong to the original manuscript.

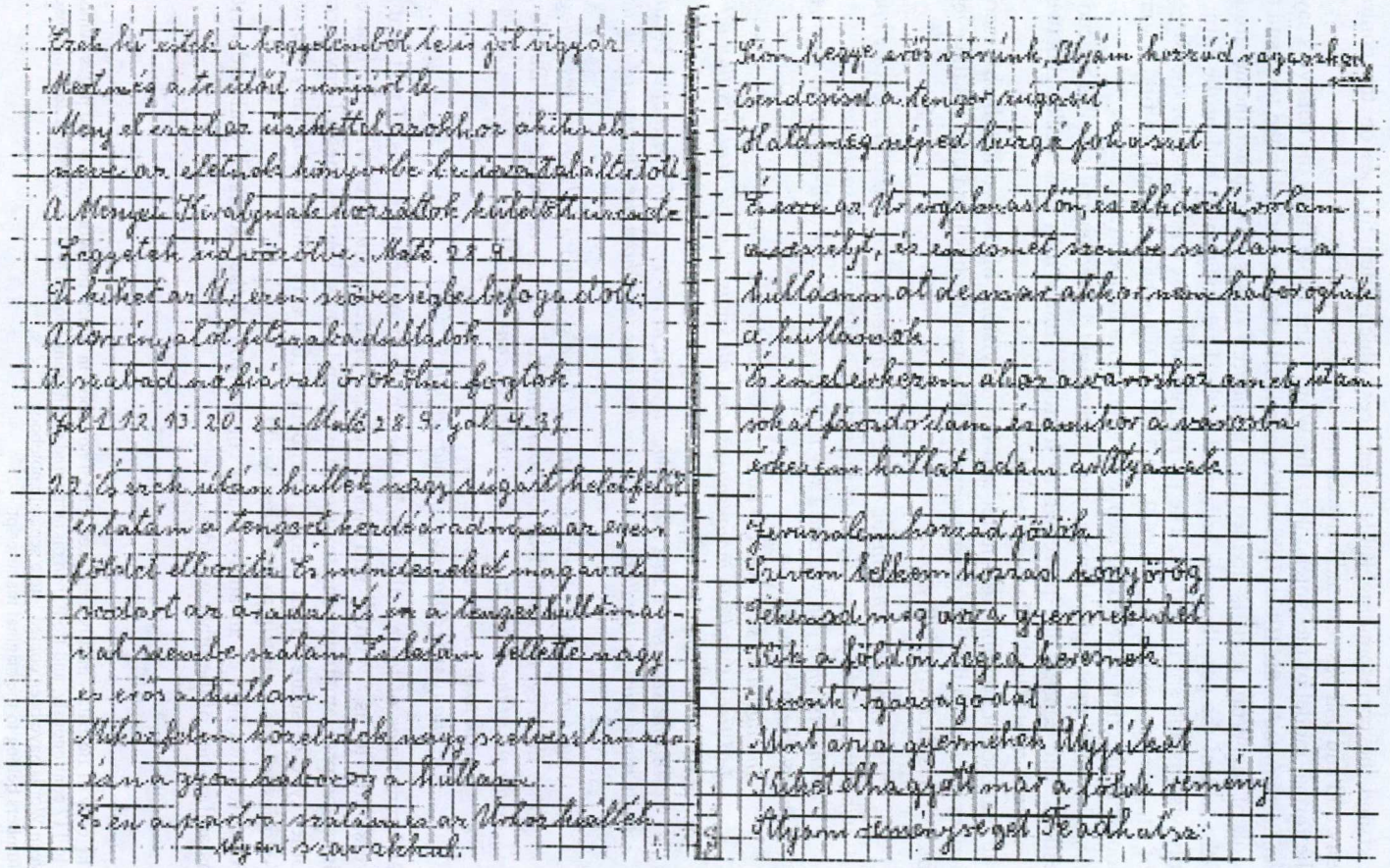

Fig. 2. Handwritten pages of the Bible paraphrase

During World War II and the Soviet era Bible paraphrases obtained a peculiar role:
– new printed pious literature (Bibles, psalm books) found no way to the Hungarians living in Kárpátalja (Sub-Carpathia) during this period, so they copied into notebook any pious text they had access to.

– their religious life was strictly controlled by the state power: only Sunday services were permitted, so it was the individual, family, and small community level of religiosity that fulfilled all the roles the Church would have under ordinary circumstances (roles such as classes of religion, spiritual care, etc.)

– Bible paraphrases played a central role at household religious services, and this role was fortified also by the content of certain parts of the since interpreted text.

TRIPS TO THE OTHER WORLD IN THE PARAPHRASE

SPIRITUAL TRIP TO THE OTHER WORLD. REACHING THE OTHER WORLD

There are two ways to establish a connection between this world and the other one according the text of the manuscript.

In one of the two types the mortal man travels and gets to the other world (naturally the trip is not physical but spiritual; the text also emphasises this).

> *"And then I was taken in spirit..."*
> *"And then the Angel of the Lord appeared for me, and took my spirit with him, and he put me down at he side of a big river..."*

The set form of the text and the attached situation where a heavenly being takes the souls with him both originate in the Bible, for example Ez 2:14.

In the other type it is not the human actor that moves around, instead, the sky opens up and a man or angel descends from heaven:

> *"And I can see seven angels descend on earth. And one of them comes to me and says..."*
> *And an angel dressed all in white appears in front of me, and he holds a candle in his right hand."*

This way the "here and now" of the location is transformed. The narrator forms part of events which are not from this earth, which are not present, and although she (he) stays at the same place the other world surrounds her (him), or the sky opens up and it becomes visible for the human eye what happens over there in the other world.

LIVING THE EXPERIENCE

The narrator (the I, the prophet) is a passive actor in the spiritual trips of the Bible paraphrase. She (he) is a viewer of the events, she (he) only suffers the things that happen to her (him) without active participation in them: she (he) can see, hear, and at most prays

when she gets frightened, or asks a question if she does not understand the meaning of her experiences.

> *2. And the I was taken in my soul and an angel was standing beside me.*
> *And the angel said. What can you see, and I said, I can see a bright cloud. And again said. Do you know who is there upon that bright cloud, and I said I did not know. And he said God appeared for you upon that bright cloud.*
> *But all I saw was a bright cloud and a sign on it.*
> *And again (the angel) said, the bright cloud is a symbol of God's love for the believing souls. And again said who do you see in the world of the cloud, and I said that I did not see anyone in the world of the bright cloud.*
> *And the angel speaks.*
> *There is nobody who would search for the truth of God, not even one.*
> *And my soul turned bitter and I cried out.*
> *Oh, how poor and miserable I am.*

As far as her own future and earthly life are concerned, she is encouraged to write down and teach what she understood, saw and heard, learned, and to lead her life in a way that she could deserve mercy. In other words her heavenly masters and experiences encourage her to become active after her return to the earthly world.

> *40. And I saw seven angels descend on earth. And he came to me and said. Judgement is made. And he spoke again. If pains torture your heart go to the altar of the Lord with a prayer of gratitude. And I went to the altar of the Lord with a prayer of gratitude and asked the Lord to ease the pain of my heart Rev.15.1. Rev.16.1.*[5]

Borbála Szanyi Mikó shaped her own role as a prophet and her own activities according to this.

TOPOGRAPHY OF THE OTHER WORLD, LOCATIONS

During her trip the prophet sees the heavens or a cloud, the ceiling of the skies, her soul reaches a mountain, a tree, a church, an altar, a church entrance or an ordinary door. All these are objects that embody a universal concept of the world. A type of modelled world, the centre of the universe appears (the tree is often mentioned in the visions of the paraphrase, similarly to the Book of Revelations that has the highest number of references in the paraphrase (Rev. 2:7, 22:2, 14, 19). The location from which the prophet sees the heavenly or future earthly world (as seen during moments of the last judgement) defines the point of view, the perspective. The narrator contemplates high above the earthly world on the top of a mountain (in a church, at an altar, on a cloud). These elements of topography demonstrate the vertical division of the world, they emphasise that the spiri-

[5] The Bible references that appear in the paraphrase form part of it.

tual traveller has reached the transcendent sphere. The soul always travels upwards and never downwards in the paraphrase, and the hell is not mentioned. Horizontally, space is divided by waters. The river bank, the spring, the sea structure space horizontally by defining what can be found on their sides. The real, earthly world only appears as a point of departure.

ACTORS OF THE TRIP TO THE OTHER WORLD

The persons in the visions can be earthly or heavenly beings. One of the earthly actors is the spiritual traveller who is present in all visions. Beside him or her groups of humans also appear who represent a particular status and who are earthly people characterised by unchanging features:

– men and women, souls of men and women with whom she prays in the heavenly temple,
– the sinners,
– those who look for the truth of God,
– many (who do not stand smoke), many (who cry out),
– the sick.

Representatives of the heavenly world show a more varied picture. There are more of them, they are of different kinds, and they appear more frequently than earthly actors:

– the angel, the angel of Lord, 7, 10 angels, the angel of Seventh Congregation, a serving soul,
– a man – dressed in white cambric dress, with stick in his right hand, 3 men
– tired wanderers : messengers of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
– the Lord
– king – a golden crown on his head, a king invisible on Earth
– pastor
– saints who were killed because they testified for Jesus
– a heavenly multitude with the Lord leading them
– the sower of seeds.

At times representatives of the heavenly world are also characterised by their physical appearance in the visions (white cambric, gold, crown, etc.), and it is only God that the text attributes personality traits to (angry, judgmental).

PLANTS, ANIMALS

Plants and animals of the visions are not real creatures, instead, almost every one of them are actors of biblical parables who incarnate symbolic contents.

– *dove, the Dove of doves*[6]
– *goat and sheep*[7]
– *snake*[8]
– *four spirited animals*[9]
– *the vine*[10]
– *wheat and tares*[11]
– *red and white flowers (symbolic colours)*
– *tree, fruit tree, fruits.*[12]

OBJECTS

Similarly to the animals and plants, the world of objects in the visions carries meanings beyond itself. The majority originate in the Bible, while a smaller portion can be traced back to a baroque collection of sermons.

– *slab, stone slab:* This object appears in the paraphrase several times, usually with an inscription (the text of the Ten Commandments, "Love", "King of Glory", "Triumph", "God has the victory"), and at other times as a clean writing table with attached writing materials that the heavenly messenger sent. The slabs are carried by angels who hand it over to the visitor–telling prophet.

– *candle and torch*: it stand for souls, or perhaps Jesus or God. The candlestick appears several times in the Book of Revelations (Rev 1:12, 13:20, 2:1) and it is related with the last judgement.

– *clay and iron dish* (Rev 2:27)

– *clean white cloths:* The serving spirit dresses the prophet in it showing her change of state (transcendence).

– *clock* : The clock shows three, its tick-tacking reminds of the coming of the Last Judgement. It is a characteristically baroque idea about earthly transience, the irresistibly passing time, a symbol of Vanities. It refers to the Act of the Apostles 2:15 *(it is the third hour of the day*) where Peter preaches about the last judgement.

– *stick, measuring stick*

– *flag:* a baroque vision of the heavenly multitude following the flag.

Objects appearing in the visions of the paraphrase also verify that one of the the-

[6] "The spirit of God has descended on Jesus as a dove." Matthew 3:16, Mark 1:10, Luke 3:22, John 1:12.

[7] During the last judgement the pastor separates the goats and the sheep. Matthew 25:32–33.

[8] The snake is presented in the paraphrase as a general incarnation of all evil. It appears as an actor of apocalyptic visions several times in the Revelations (Rev 9:19, 12:9, 20:2).

[9] It appears in apocalyptic visions of prophets of the Old Testament (Ez 1:5) and in the Revelations as well (Rev 4:6–9, 19:4).

[10] Christ can be identified with the vine, and the chosen people with the vineyard of the Lord. Esaias 5:1, Matthew 21:33.

[11] Jesus' parable is an often cited part of the Bible. Matthew 13:24,36.

[12] Trees have already been mentioned in the section on topography. The fruit bearing tree and the fruit of the soul are often cited phrases in sermons. Matthew 13:8, Luke 6:43, Gal 5:22, Rev 22:2.

matic emphases of the text of the paraphrase is the Last Judgement, the ideas about the last things. Its image construction was influenced also by frequently baroque visual elements (or images employed in sermons and pious texts).

NATURAL PHENOMENA

Cosmic phenomena and catastrophes (fire, smoke, flood, thunder, lightning, earthquake, cloud, sun, sea, star, moon, darkness, rainbow) belong to the apocalyptic vision, and are typical visual elements of the Bible (Revelations) and of the Baroque as well.

ORAL NARRATIVES ABOUT TRIPS TO THE OTHER WORLD

Three members of the congregation told stereotypical narratives of their trips to the other world as their own dreams. They all told their stories in the first person singular but they emphasised that they were dreams. A shared feature of the stories is the appearance of the late prophet woman, Borbála Szanyi Mikó, and even of other members of the "Erdősi" congregation (mentioned by their names).

Thus, earthly actors are known to the narrators, they are real people (as opposed to the typified, conventionalised earthly figures of the paraphrase).

These are typical motifs of the persons representing the other world in the belief stories:

– *a small old man with white hair:* he always appears as a helper, he escorts earthly actors to the other world (he takes them over in his boat, to the island on the other side of the river),

– *the brown man, the half man:* negative power, the incarnation of the Evil,

– *Jesus* : the counterpoint of the former actor.

The earthly actors of these stories are active: they start out for the other world on their own, by their own initiative (no mention is made about possession), and they have to pass a series of tests on the way (they have to get through a small hole, the Satan tempts them with worldly books, with mirrors and grimaces, they have to push trains apart with their hands so that they can reach Jesus).

Having returned to the earth there are no activities (for example they do not tell about their experiences in public, they do not teach, they do not prophesy), however, the heavenly trip and the personal encounter with Jesus becomes a cathartic experience that change those believers who made it to the other world (they become happy, their souls become light).

These stories mention no plants or animals, the tree is the only element that appears in the paraphrase as well. This tree, however, is not the topological element with central location in the model of the universe; it is the well defined object of the human environment (the walnut tree in the garden of the mother-in-law – the prophet woman itself – where the other world travellers return to after the trip).

The situation of objects is quite similar: the narrator mentions actual elements of his or her everyday world of objects. The *chair* from which her mother-in-law rises when they start out to the other world, a small stool ("like what fishermen have"), the small old man widens the opening between the two worlds with a *carving hatchet* so that everybody can get through. There is a *house* in the other world where travellers are first tempted by the Evil, and then Jesus appears to them, and there is a *table* and a *chair* in the house. The text of the paraphrase contains no such "household elements, the other world is not so common", it is not so close to the narrators' every day world of objects.

Besides everyday objects we can also find symbolic objects in the text. We can see, however, that even in these cases the point of departure is closely connected to the narrators' own immediate physical environment: the escort takes members of the congregation to the other-world-island by boat (the village is situated by the river Latorca where some villagers dedicate themselves to fishing!), and there is an *arched door* to get through to reach the other world. There are two objects which appear in the other world stories as well as in the Notebook of the Word: the *slab* with inscription "The Gift of God", and the *mirror* (the devil holds it up to the narrator so that she can see herself in it) together with the *book* (*"magazines"*) as tools of the evil temptation, as embodiments of mundane vanity.

The Bible paraphrase is a written, semi-popular text, while the narratives of trips to the other world are orally transmitted belief-stories. Differences in the imagery of the other world are natural consequences of the differences in genre, form, and origin: the more general formulation in case of the paraphrase, and the personal tone, individual formulation, realistic details in case of the narratives. We have to bear in mind that it was the same community that used both types of texts. Besides, there exists an oral tradition of the originally written text of the Bible paraphrase since the leader of the congregation demanded that members learned it by heart. This knowledge of former members of the ecclesiola is still so intensive that they can cite certain parts of the paraphrase while they talk, and they express their identification with certain parts of it (for instance, they identify the "Erdősi" congregation[13] with the Laodicea congregation that is mentioned in the notebook). However, they do not tell these parts as their own other world experiences, as they do with the belief-stories.

Their knowledge about the other world and thus the imagery they constructed about it is very delicately proportioned, it is varied as far as its sources and origins are concerned, and it is expressed in complex genres, however, this knowledge and these ideas do not mix, but live together side by side precisely divided, even in the mind of a single person.

The social and political changes of the early 1990s in the Soviet Union had an impact on the fate of the Bible paraphrases. The limitations on religious life ceased to exist, and pious activities related to the institutional church became lively. Intensive missionary work started out from Hungary in the form of evangelisation, organisation of Bible study groups (the priest who arrived here in 1992 had known nothing about the actual function-

[13] Rev 1:11, 3:14–22

ing household religious pious literature). The new reading and the lack of an immediately threatening socio-political crisis turned the attention away from the hand-written Bible paraphrases at once.

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WAYS OF ADAPTATION TO THE ANTI-RELIGIOUS ATTACK OF THE SOVIET REGIME AND THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION IN OLONETS KARELIA AT PRESENT

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INTRODUCTION

In the history of Karelians – by Karelia I mean Russian Karelia, or the Republic of Karelia, which always has been part of Russia – there were some major events in the 1920s and 1930s which posed a serious threat to their own ethnic culture. These were, first, the attack of the Soviet regime on the Orthodox religion, which started effectively at the end of 1920s, in connection with the period of collectivization, and second, the ethnic persecution of Karelians, which in practice meant the destruction of families, because most Karelian working age men were imprisoned and expelled to Siberia or executed at the end of 1930s. These disasters were only intensified by the sufferings of the Second World War, widespread liquidation of villages which were accused of having "no perspective", as it was called by the central government, between the 1960s and the 1980s (VIRTARANTA 1995: 339), and the settlement of a new population (Russians, Belarussians, Ukrainians, etc.) in Karelia, which led to the present situation, in which Karelians number only 10% (about 80 000) of the population of the Republic.

In this paper I concentrate on analysing some of the consequences brought about by the attack of the Soviet regime on the Orthodox religion in Russian Karelia after the end of 1920s. I also point out how the Karelians reacted to it, what happened on the grass root level, and in what ways people tried to adapt to the new situation in which religion was a forbidden subject.

I discuss three major issues: 1) How women became specialists in religion, 2) how rituals of the dead gained importance and became a way to express religious feelings, and 3) how oral narratives were used to draw the line between believers and non-believers. Finally, I discuss what the religious situation looks like in Karelia at present, after the new law of 1990 which guarantees freedom of religion in Russia. I want to stress that much of what we know about these things is oral history or people's history, something that people did not dare to speak about to the outsiders before 1990s, before the collapse of the Soviet regime. My examples are essentially drawn from the information we have collected during the fieldwork carried out by the Folklore Archives of the Finnish Literature Society in Olonets Karelia between 1991 and 1996.

BACKGROUND: THE ORTHODOX CHURCH IN KARELIA

The Orthodox Church has had a long history in Karelia. In fact, the earliest contacts with Christianity in the Finnish-Karelian culture area were those via trade routes with Byzantium; this has been proven by the fact that important Christian concepts in the Finnish language are based on Old Slavonic (risti "cross", pappi "priest", pakana "pagan", for example), and by early discoveries of Christian symbols in Karelian graves of the 12th and the 13th centuries (KIRKINEN 1963: 70–74). In 1227 the Orthodox Church began its regular work in Karelia, and the monastery of Valamo was probably established as early as the middle of the 12th century; by the end of the 16th century, the number of monasteries in Karelia was about sixty. Missionary work used the monasteries as its base of operation, and has been characterized as non-violent (KIRKINEN 1995: 245). During centuries, a syncretistic religion, which combined elements of Karelian ethnic folk religion and of the Orthodox faith, was formed. People's religious knowledge about the dogma of the Christian faith was not very clear – I am referring to the accounts of some Finnish scholars who travelled and collected folk poetry in Karelia in the 19th century (Lönnrot, Genetz). This is due to the fact that people generally could not read, and the religious education of the Church was poor. The priests used Church Slavonic in services, and there were very few Karelian-speaking priests in the villages. But the Orthodox religion had become a meaningful part of people's lives, and Christian ethics were taught in families, if not through books, then by means of oral narratives, sacred legends, which taught proper moral behaviour by presenting concrete examples. The holy icons were revered not only in the village chapels and churches, but also in the holy corners of Karelian homes.

THE ATTACKS BEGIN

The attack on religion in Russia, as in Karelia, did not effectively begin until the very end of the 1920s. Strict legislation against religious activities was passed in 1929. The reason was the intensification of collectivization: the clergy and the "kulaks", the well-to-do peasants, were regarded as the worst obstacles to collectivization, and thus had to be eliminated (LAITILA 1999). One of our Karelian informants gave us an ironic emic definition, based on life experience, of the term "kulak". According to her, "Those who worked, were called kulaks, and those who just sat and drank alcohol, were non-kulaks" (SKSÄ 1994. Fieldtape 12: 3). In Karelia, it was a double burden to be both a Karelian man and a so called kulak ; it meant certain death in the 1930s.

Anti-religious propaganda was spread in Karelia by the League of the Godless; it has been estimated that the number of propagandists, in most cases teachers and Komsomols, was about 6 500 in the entire Soviet Karelia at the end of the 1930s (LAITILA 1999). As a result, numerous churches and village chapels were either destroyed or closed and changed into clubs, stores, museums, hospitals, factories, henhouses, whatever. Only in remote places were some small village chapels able to survive. Equally, in one of the villages in which we have conducted fieldwork, the small chapel still exists, in

protection of the forest, but the large church that was situated in the middle of the village was destroyed. Karelians usually opposed the destruction of the churches, but they could do nothing, just stand and stare from a distance. Sometimes they managed to save some of the icons and take them home.

Reports about people's actual feelings about these events are very scarce, because people were afraid of speaking about these things, and in fact, it was not until 1990s that it was possible to visit Russian Karelian villages. Thus I want to read a rare passage from the memoirs written by a Finnish schoolteacher, Siina Taulamo, in Olonets Karelia during the Finnish occupation of the area in 1941–44. She tells of her Karelian friend Palaga, who told her in 1941 the following about the destruction of the village church when the Komsomols had arrived:

> "They took everything, my Ziina, what I had, but they could not take one thing: God who is in the heaven, and in my heart. – I had two good friends, who were sisters, unmarried. We used to go to church together. And then started the period of terror. Lists were carried from one village to another, and you could sign – voluntarily, as they said – in favour of abolishing the churches. Because we did not sign, we were threatened with all kinds of punishments. The sisters took off on a long journey to Moscow in order to appeal to the rulers there that we could keep our church. This did not bring any help, and then we just had to watch, crying, how the godless came and climbed the belltower and unattached the bells, which fell down and broke. The same happened to the icons. We rushed to the church in the morning to save the icons, and then we turned back with our loads, the village chief arrived and began to scold us. We were going to go on, but he took our loads and cut the icons in half with his axe. Then one of the sisters, Tatjana, hit the man on the ear with her full strength and said that there will be God's picture in one place where nobody can rob it, and pointed to her heart. The village chief became furious and shouted that we would pay a high price for this."

Palaga went on to tell that these two sisters were persecuted after this and finally sent to prison, and they never returned (TAULAMO 1985: 48–50). This kind of open opposition was possible only in the beginning and it did not occur later. The Karelians soon had other problems to think of when the ethnic persecution began at the end of 1930s.

So it followed from the persecution of not only the priests but also of local people that religion became a private matter, a secret that was kept inside the walls of the home. Martti Haavio wrote in his diary during the war in 1941, when he was staying in Olonets Karelia during the Finnish occupation (HAAVIO 1969: 150–151):

> "People still lament at the graves. And they carry food for the deceased. When the village chapels were taken into new use, the religious exercises were brought into homes. I have visited homes in which there are twenty icons in the holy corner: Mother of God with the child on her arm, St. Ilya, Saints Sergei and Herman, Alexander Svirskoi, the patron saint of Karelia. I have seen how people light home made candles in front of them." – "The Orthodox church is the

> church of the forefathers in Olonets. It is a church of martyrs. People have cherished its sacraments in secrecy during these years. When the last priest was expelled, old women baptised the children and read the memorial services for their dead in desolate chapels."

There was some pressure in the Finnish Lutheran church, at the beginning of the Finnish occupation, to start baptizing the Russian Karelian population into Lutheranism. This was because some right-wing Lutheran ministers could not understand that the Karelians had their own popular version of the Orthodox practice, which was carried out by the laity. These Lutheran ministers considered Karelian Orthodoxy to be a form of paganism and "Russian barbarism". The baptisms were stopped by General Mannerheim after a few months (LAITILA 1999). In any case, this period of baptisms can be viewed as a thoughtless procedure against the very essence of Karelian culture, one more effort to force people to give up their own religion which was very much part of their identity as Karelians.

WOMEN AS PRIESTS

When religion was forcefully removed from the public sector of people's lives and it became private, it also became part of the women's sphere because it was brought into the home. In the village of Yläleh where we have been doing our fieldwork, the ritual specialist and greatest authority in religious matters was a 90-year old woman Katja Nikitina. She had learnt religious songs in Church Slavonic while she was staying in Siberia, and had been living there in the family of an Orthodox priest who also had been expelled. She brought religion with her to this village, which was her former home village. It was not a new phenomenon that ordinary people could act as priests; we heard about a man in a nearby village who had acted as a priest before the war. They did not, however, perform the sacraments, with the exception of emergency baptisms. During the post-war decades the persons who did this were women. Katja Nikitina had also chosen a younger woman, a relative of hers, as her disciple who was to go on after her, and who also became a trusted religious specialist among the women of this village. She was a person who was invited to sit at the wake for the three nights after a deathcase, and she knew the songs that had to be sung on those occasions. In some cases the songs had been handwritten in notebooks, which were passed from one house to another.

This phenomenon was not unusual in the former Soviet Union. There are very similar reports from other Finno-Ugrian peoples. For example, Kaija Heikkinen, a Finnish ethnologist, has reported that in Vepsian villages (the Veps people are another Baltic-Finnic group living southeast of the Karelian area) groups of women, with some ritual specialists as their leaders, organize religious festivals called "zavetan prazdnikad" (avowed feasts), in which some women act in the role of the priest (HEIKKINEN 1992, 1996). Also a Komi folklorist Valerij SARAPOV (1995) has written about the religious festival organized each year for the miracle-working icon of Paraskeva Pjatnitsa in the village of Krivoje in Komi. The organizers are local women, who have kept the tradition alive throughout the difficult years of religious persecution. Their leader is

Darja Kirillovna Jakovlevna, who also acts as a priest and religious authority in the village.

These groups of women, whether in Karelia or in Komi, also take care of village chapels. In the village of Yläleh, the women made icons out of calendar pictures, framed them and brought to the chapel, because all the valuable icons had been stolen. The key to the chapel is kept by the leader, and she is also responsible for the money donated to the chapel.

RITUALS FOR THE DEAD

Karelian women have always been specialists in rituals for the dead, centuries before the Soviet Era (see for example KONKKA 1985). They knew the laments, and they were the ones who observed the memorial days of the dead by visiting the graves with ritual foods. But before the attack on religion, the Orthodox priests also used to take part in the funerals, they read the prayers and sang the liturgical songs. Folk rituals and the religious customs of the Church were performed side by side. According to ethnographic reports, the priests did not oppose to the folk customs, but the priests cooperated with the people, and performed the services (see HAAVIO 1934, 1937).

The key idea in Karelian death rituals was to keep the family together: one's family consisted of not only living members but also the deceased members as well. In memorial rituals the deceased relatives were and are taken into account nine generations backwards. It was utterly important to the well-being of the family that all the necessary death rituals were carried out in the proper manner, and equally important that the needs of the dead members of the family "in the other air" were carefully observed. If this was not done, the dead would come to the living in their dreams and make their complaints (JÄRVINEN 1995). Our informants pointed out that the dead can eat only if food is provided for them by the living: this takes place either during the memorial festivals organised for the dead, or by ritual visits to the graves when food is brought to the graveyard. Keeping this specific feature of Karelian culture – that the dead must be well taken care of – in mind, it is not difficult to imagine, how personally painful and culturally debilitating it was, when at the end of 1930s Karelian men simply began to disappear at night, and never returned. Nobody knew what had happened to them; if there had been news right away that these people have died, it would have been possible to organize the necessary death rituals for them in order to secure their better life beyond and thus peace for the living, too. Our informant Nina Sergejeva told us that each time her mother and mother-in-law met they started to cry together – both of them were widows of disappeared men. It was not until the end of 1980s and beginning of 1990s that in many cases the fate of these people was finally discovered in mass graves. The denial of public sorrow is one of the painful weapons used by those holding the power. The same happened after the Finnish Civil War in 1918, when the losers of the war, the Reds, were denied the proper burial and public mourning of their dead (PELTONEN 1996: 220–222).

In fact the funeral and memorial customs were the only religious rites that could still exist in Orthodox Karelia – now without the priest but organised and carried out by vil-

lage women. Our field group also documented a memorial ritual in the village of Yläleh, where the leader of the ritual was 90-year old Katja, who performed the songs of the priest.

It also seems that the dead have gained importance in people's minds in other ways. Our informants, elderly Karelian women, used to tell that they can pray to their dead relatives and ask them for help. Could it be that in the present Karelian folk religion, the dead have partly occupied the role of the Christian saints? It is clear that people's knowledge of Orthodox saints has deteriorated. For example, the saints' legends that our Folklore Archive collected in Orthodox Karelia even in the 1930s do not exist in oral narration any more. The only Christian saint that is still appealed to in the village where we have been working is St. Nicholaos, who has traditionally been an important saint in Orthodox Karelia. One reason for his fame might be that the village chapel is dedicated to St. Nicholaos.

THE USE OF WARNING LEGENDS IN ORAL NARRATION: BELIEVERS AND NON-BELIEVERS

In the summer of 1992 when our group of field researchers visited the village for a second time, the elderly people of the village were very upset. Their old cemetery, which had not been used since end of 1930s, but was still a holy place for the villagers, had been ploughed up and turned into a potato field. This had been done by a newcomer, a Russian man from the city of Petrozavodsk, who had built his summer cottage nearby. The land had been given to him by the Karelian village chief who was classified as a non-believer by the women. The issue of religion, and especially believing in God or not, was a very hot topic in the village at the beginning of 1990s. In this context, the Karelian women of the village, who were believers themselves, told several warning legends about God's revenge. These were legends about the bad consequences of cemetery or church sacrilege: the result would be an illness or death.

After having studied the archived texts about cemetery sacrilege – most of the texts are from the 1930s – I can state that the emphasis of these legends has certainly changed (JÄRVINEN, forthcoming, 1998). In the old days, the Karelians were very careful not to harm the cemetery in any way, because it was feared that the dead had a special power, and an illness caused by dead would infect people; whereas today the Karelians would rather speak of God's revenge, not the revenge of the dead. It seemed to be very important for these women, to do the morally right thing, and this was the distinctive line drawn between them and the newcomer (STARK et al. 1996: 254–256). They did not seem to care much that he happened to be a Russian, but his deed certainly concretized the lack of respect towards the dead and the lack of morals of those who were outsiders and totally unaware of or indifferent to Karelian traditional behaviour and norms. The village chief was a Karelian, who had achieved his position in the village during the Soviet era, and he was condemned, too. Thus the dispute did not have an ethnic but a religious and moral quality, in which the crucial question was: do you believe in God or not?

CONCLUSIONS

From the examples given above, I have tried to show in what ways religious life in Karelian villages has adapted, and how it still survived; what is left of the former religion, and how the interpretation and practice of religion have changed.

And what about the present day in 1998? The social circumstances in the Republic of Karelia have gone from bad to worse – the capitalist economy of Russia has forgotten the people of lower income, i.e. the retired and the jobless. In this situation, and as freedom of religion now exists, new religious movements have gained support. Various religious groups – for example, the Pentacostalists, Jehova's Witnesses, and Lutherans, bring humanitarian aid, food, clothes, and tools, to Russian Karelia, and thus gain support among the people. They are often more effective in their work and more tempting in their offerings than the Orthodox church, which also has started to build up a new congregational life in Russian Karelia; by the end of 1994 there were 23 active Orthodox congregations in the diocese of Petrozavodsk and Olonets (HUURINAINEN 1995: 105).

Also in the villages in Olonets where we started to do fieldwork in the beginning of 1990s, the religious situation is changing rapidly. In the autumn of 1997, a Lutheran congregation with one hundred baptized members has been established in this area which has been Russian Orthodox since the 13th century. The changes are very rapid right now, and constant observation and documentation are needed, because we are now witnessing radical changes in Karelian religious life and culture as a whole.

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EX VOTO TEXTS WRITTEN DEVOTION IN THE CULT OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

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In this paper I am going to introduce a popular Catholic movement of the 19–20th century, namely the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I intend to analyse a special part of the written sources connected to this devotion and try to reveal its representational capacity.*

The cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was one of the most popular devotions among Catholics between 1850 and 1950. However it became widespread during the last century, it is often said to have its origin in early Christianity. In the Middle Ages there was already a wave of devotion exclusively among the clergy.[1] Hereby I am speaking neither about this early cult, nor about the theology of the cult. Both are widely studied unlike its cultural and social history.[2]

The devotion set off on its unrivalling career at the end of the 17th century encouraged by a French nun's, Margaret Alacoque's, visions and promises she got from Jesus. Margaret Alacoque had her three most significant visions between 1673–1675. According to sacred tradition Jesus lamented to her on the lovelessness of people. Therefore appeasement became the centre characteristic feature of the modern veneration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. According to sacred tradition Jesus gave special promises to those venerating his Heart. These promises have been acting as a driving force of this successful career of the cult.

The most efficient promise was connected to First Friday. According to the promise Jesus declared to Margaret Alacoque, those confessing and receiving Holy Communion on the First Friday of nine consecutive months would not die without sacraments. In fact this means the grace of the so-called 'good death', thus escaping from damnation. Celebration of First Fridays is still very popular among the older generation of Catholics in Hungary. Promises, especially the mentioned one made this cult very popular and widespread.

In order to propagate the cult religious communities, confraternities were laid al-

* I would like to say thank for the generous support of the Faludi Ferenc Akadémia.

[1] CORETH, Anna 1986: 224.

[2] On the early cult e.g. CORETH 1986: 224–227.; In case of the Premonstratensian order, about the pre-Alacoque cult: SCHREIBER, Georg 1940: 181–201.; RICHSTÄTTER, K. 1924. All with further bibliography. About the theology of the cult e.g. GRILLMEIER, 1948.; DELP, 1948: 81–84.; MARTELET, 1995: 79–86.

ready in the 17th century. Most significant were the confraternities of the Sacred Heart of Jesus appearing in Hungary already in the baroque age.[3] Though the cult gained its real popularity in the middle of the 19th century when local organisations were formed in almost every parish. This was already a modern mass movement with numerous participants from different parts and social strata of the country.

The Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was most efficient to propagate the cult from the mid-19th century with a widespread press activity. Today we hardly estimate the size of the religious literature formed as a part of the cult. Hereby I only refer to the Jesuit Béla Bangha's work entitled "The great promise of Jesus' Heart", which had ten editions between 1914–1942, occasionally in 20, 35 and 50 000 issues. (Fig. 1.) The most active propagators of the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus stressed the importance of cult propagation through press. The apologetic, combative Christianity of the age struggling against the "immoral" world approved of using quantitative means against the bad influence of non-Catholic press. The Jesuit monk Mike Tóth wrote in 1913: "Will the press allow itself everything, then the state should not dare protect its subjects' most valuable worth: their reputation? Will the press support the band of dishonest criminals?"[4]

To popularise the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1861 a newsletter was published in France, called the Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This developed into a group of publications: the national edition of the Messenger firstly appeared in Hungarian in 1867. Before World War II Catholics all over the world were informed by similar Messengers on more than 60 languages about the improvement of the veneration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Messenger, the most efficient propagator of the cult in Hungary was active between 1867 and 1944. The paper published pious literature and moral stories, also the intention that the believers could pray together with other readers of the Messenger all over the world. It also gave information about the consecration of new churches, altars, sculptures and church flags dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. A very good source for the investigation of the cult is the extremely informative Messenger. (Figs 2, 3.)

From now on I consider a permanent column of the Messenger as a source. The final column in every issue was the so-called 'thanksgiving texts'.[5] Here the believers gave thank publicly for a grace which happened to them and they assigned to the help of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. (Fig. 4.) In each issue 20–30 announcements were published in a length of 2–20 lines. During over 70 years, 12 times a year! As a demonstration of the size of this source-material: these texts together would make almost 2000 printed pages. On the basis of their size I consider these letter fragments as suitable for investigation.[6]

[3] TÜSKÉS–KNAPP 1992: 8–37.

[4] TÓTH, Mike 1913: 124–125.

[5] The original Hungarian term is 'hálanyilatkozatok'. According to English parallels, 'thanksgiving' is the term used in pious literature. See parallels in English Catholic papers: e.g. The Universe (April 5 1998, 45) and Catholic Times (April 5 1998, 15). In these papers even a printed form is included where you are allowed to say thanks to heavenly powers in less than 20 words.

[6] Here we have to mention the parallelism of this section with the newspapers 'Letter to the Editor' section. A study in case of political press: TUNSTALL 1977: 205–248.

Fig 1. The cover page of Béla Bangha's work ('The great promise of Jesus' Heart') which was published ten times between the two world wars.

SZENTSÉGES SZIVÉNEK
HIRNÖKE.

SZERKESZTI KALOCSÁN TÓTH MIKE, JÉZUS TÁRSASÁGÁNAK TAGJA.

XXVI. évf. 1. sz. MEGJELENIK MINDEN HÓNAP ELSŐ NAPJAIBAN. 1893. Január.

Jézus Szive.

Közel két ezer éve, hogy keleten ,az idők teljén férfiu jelent meg, tüneményként, melynek a világ történelmében nincsen párja, égi tüneményként, mely felragyog keleten s messze küldi sugárfényét, messze napnyugatnak végső távolára. A keresztény századok nemzedékről nemzedékre a világ megváltójának, valósággal Istennek, az élő Isten egy-fiának vallják, és jellemét eszményképül tartva szemmel, a legdicsőbb elmék, a legnemesebb szivek azzal igyekeztek feljutni az erkölcsi tökéletesség magasára, hogy magokat az ő elveihez s érzelmeihez szabták, s lőn szivök az ő Szivének képemássa.

Jézus Szive!... Mit mondjunk, mél-

* Kiváló figyelmébe ajánljuk olvasóinknak dr. Nogáll J. püspök úr örök becsű könyvét «Keresztény vezérczikkek», mely Nagyváradon dr. Vucskics Gyula theol. tanár úrnál megrendelhető. — Az említett gyönyörű könyvből *mutatványul* ime egy czikk!

Fig. 2. Cover page of the Messenger in January 1893.

JÉZUS
SZENTSÉGES SZIVÉNEK
HIRNÖKE.

SZERKESZTI KALOCSÁN TÓTH MIKE, JÉZUS TÁRSASÁGÁNAK TAGJA

E folyóirat évi ára 3 korona.
A »Hirnök« és »Mária-Kert« együtt 4 k. 60 f.

XXXIX. évf. 4. sz. MEGJELENIK MINDEN HÓNAP ELSŐ NAPJAIBAN. 1905. Április.

Imameghallgatás.

Kat. hitünk tanai szerint az ima lelkünknek Istenhez való felemelése, mintegy beszélgetés Istennel. Az imában valami bajnak elháritásáért, vagy valami jónak elnyeréseért könyörgünk; vagy pedig Istent, a mi Urunkat magasztaljuk és dicsőítjük. Arra is tanít bennünket az egyház, hogy a jól végzett ima rendkívüli haszonnal jár; sőt szükséges is az ima, mert Isten ettől tette függővé a sok kegyelmet; »mert minden, aki kér, nyer.« (Máté 7. 8.) Jézus mondja: »Kérjetek és adatik nektek« (Máté 7, 7.) Maga az Üdvözítő biztosit: »Mindazt, mit imádkozván kértek, higyétek, hogy megnyeritek és megleszen nektek.« (Márk 11, 24.) Az Üdvözítő példája s buzdítása szerint mindenkoron imádkoztak a keresztények, s az ima hatalma minden időben mutatkozott. Az Istennek tetsző ima által minden testi és lelki jót nyerhetünk, s távol tarthatunk magunktól minden bajt;

Hirnök.

Fig. 3. Cover page of the Messenger in April 1905.

— 54 —

Jézus szents. Szivének áldásai.

S. — A csapás gyakran istenhez vezet, az öröm többször elbódít. Engem is csapások által vezetett az Úr magához. Öt holnapja volt már, hogy kimondhatatlanokat szenvedtem, mindenfélét próbáltak velem az orvosok, míg végre kimondották, hogy gyógyíthatatlan. — Én nem csüggedtem : a bold. Szűz pártfogását kérve, Jézus sz. Szivéhez folyamodtam és három sz. kilenczedet tartottam . . . Alázatos kérésem meghallgatást nyert. — *M. F.*

S. J. — Egy a «Szents. Megváltóról» nevezett zárdaszűz a legforróbb hálaját fejezi ki Jézus isteni Szivének, a bold. Szűz és szent Ligori Alfonznak közbenjárására nyert meghallgattatásért.

S. A. — Egy másik, ugyanazon kongregatióból, növendékeit ajánlja Jézus szents. Szivének ájtatos imáiba.

Ó.-B. — Igéretünkhöz híven, nyilván mondunk hálát és köszönetet a legszentebb Szivnek, hogy sz. Flórián könyörgésére házunkat nagy tűzveszély alkalmával megoltalmazni kegyeskedett s még számtalan más ügyben meghallgatni méltóztatott.

Sz. — A hála őszinte érzelmével mondok hálát a nyilvánosság terén is Jézus szents. Szivének azon nagy kegyeért, hogy alázatos imádságomat meghallgatni méltóztatott. Egy igen nagy jótévőm súlyos betegen feküdvén, ő érette Jézus sz. Szive tiszteletére kilenczedet tartottam. A sz. Szív meghallgatta könyörgésemet ; a ki súlyos beteg volt, az most egészséges s jól érzi magát. — *Cs. M.*

E. — Legszentebb kötelességemnek teszek eleget, midőn igéretemhez híven a «Hirnök»-ben nyilvánosan forró hálámat fejezem ki a legszentebb, legjóságosabb és legirgalmasabb Szív, valamint édes Anyám a bold. Szűz iránt azon nagy kegyelemért, melynél fogva engem egy nehéz bajból kisegíteni méltóztattak. — *. . . a.*

P. — Dicsőség és hála legyen Jézus szent Szivének, a lurdi szentséges Szűznek, sz. Józsefnek és sz. Antalnak, hogy súlyos betegségemből minden utóbaj nélkül felgyógyultam. Ezt csakis az imameghallgatásnak tulajdoníthatom. Ezerszeres hála, imádat, szeretet legyen mindörökké Jézus szents. Szivének e kegyelemért. — *A. n.*

Sz. — Legmélyebb hála és köszönet az édes Jézus szent Szivének azon kegyelemért, hogy bennünket nehéz vizsgálatainkon reményünk felett megsegített. — *S. J.; L. J.; P. M.*

Miháli. — A legmélyebb hálával eltelve, nagy örömmel vágyik szivünk, igéretünkhöz képest, nyilvános köszönetet mondani Jézus

Fig. 4. The thanksgivings. The original title is "Blessings of the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

In this paper I volunteer to present my preliminary results, though I intend to analyse the whole material in the future. Hereby I pay attention to a few particular years. I have chosen the thanksgiving texts of the years 1889, 1909 and 1925 for deeper analysis. I accepted them as analysable samples. I take one text as a unit of analysis.

*

In the course of my analysis I used the content analysis methodology developed by the Anneberg School of Communication at the University of Pennsylvania and by its Professor, Klaus Krippendorf.[7] In this paper I would like to explore the systems of the texts, the trends and analyse the communication created by these texts.

I. STRUCTURE OF THE TEXTS

First I would like to explore the system in the studied texts. I am going to identify the units of analysation at the very beginning. Then I am going to investigate the organisation of the texts and determine its subtypes.

1. In fact the studied texts are incomplete letters without names and places put into one group at the end of each issue of the Messenger. We can find three fundamental structural parts. This is a kind of basic structure:

Basic structure

1. place of origin (initial, sometimes the whole name) [– marked with spacing]
2. main text [– marked as italic]
3. name (initial, rarely the whole name) or status, occupation [– marked as bold]

"A r a d – Thanks, honour and adoration forever to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for answering the prayer of his unworthy child. – **L. M.**"[8]

2. As the second step of system-level analysis I am going to investigate the main text.[9] With the analysation of its patterns we can determine a logical basic structure.

Basic structure – main text

a) thanksgiving [spacing]
b) to a heavenly power [italic]
c) for grace [bold]

[7] KRIPPENDORF 1995.
[8] Jézus Szíve Hírnöke (Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) 1909: 158/4.
[9] KRIPPENDORF 1995: 37.

"Arad – Thanks, honour and adoration forever *to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for* answering **the prayer of his unworthy child.** – L. M."

In longer and complex texts the parts of this basic structure act as an argumentation to prove the effect of heavenly grace.

3. As a third step I would like to create communicational standards. According to the detailment we can define basic types. I have separated three basic types of the texts:

Basic types

a) short, inscription-like
b) stereotypical
c) everyday miracle narratives

a) short, inscription-like

"H. – Thanks, honour to Jesus for his help in danger. – Mrs. K."[10]

"P. – I think, one of my male relatives was encouraged to surmount the difficulties of life with the mediation of Blessed Mary. – K. A."[11]

These are thanksgiving texts, quite often praising not the Sacred Heart of Jesus or even not Jesus. In such texts the writer uses the possibility of saying thanks publicly. The first text is especially very close to the so called thanksgiving-plaques put into church walls. The most important feature in these texts is that they are unfinished sentences without any details.

b) stereotypical

"T. – My pleasant duty according to my old promise is to say thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and praise him openly/publicly, as he heard me in my great necessity. – K. M."[12]

This group of texts, named as stereotypical is the greatest. This is the most important part of the two–threehundred texts a year. We can analyse some quantitative trends, but the writer, the place of origin and the intention all remain in secret. We can find all basic structural elements of the main text but the analysation possibilities are very limited.

c) everyday miracle narratives[13]

One fifth to one tenth of the texts belong to the third group. These narratives are more detailed; the intention is clearly stressed. These are the most important texts for further research, as they are suitable for further structural analysis. We can reveal the textualisation process.

[10] Jézus Szíve Hírnöke (Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) 1909: 158/8.
[11] Jézus Szíve Hírnöke (Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) 1905: 125/7.
[12] Jézus Szíve Hírnöke (Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) 1909: 158/5.
[13] We can refer to these texts as 'personal experience stories'. BENNETT, 1985: 87–97.

The subject of my analysation now is the main text, where I would like to introduce the clearly separable patterns. As we will see the order is changeable, and in spite of this, the logical relation remains.

In the following text I would like to exemplify the structure of the everyday miracles which is a flexibly expanding variant of the basic structure:

Basic structure

1. when earthly powers are not able to help [spacing]
2. one prays to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and makes a vow [italic]
3. when the problem is solved [bold]
4. one gives thanks and redeems the promise: publishes their thanks [normal]

"Jb. – One of my students became so ill, that there was not any hope for her recovery. But as I was losing my faith in human knowledge my hope was growing, that the Sacred Heart of Jesus would recover my little daughter. *I encouraged my pupils to devout prayer and trust and started a novena to the pious Heart and I promised that I would going publish the acceptance of our request and thanks in the Messenger.* Now I joyfully redeem my vow and say warm gratitude and thanks also in the name of my little pupils to the charitable Heart, as he heard our request. **My little pupil recovered quickly.** – A teacher"[14]

This structure is again only a basic scheme of these detailed texts.[15] There are a number of different patterns which can vary this architecture. I would like to mention some. The most interesting additional element is the so-called Revenge of God pattern. In these cases the person not keeping his vow recognises the warning of God in some everyday problems and quickly redeems his promise, which usually means to publish thanksgiving. As if God would notice that somebody had broken the agreement.

"E. – I have promised somebody to publish thanksgiving as he was heard by the Sacred Heart of Jesus after a novena. It was two months ago and I postponed to redeem my promise. Now I am in the same trouble from which the mentioned person had escaped. I feel this is a deserved punishment for my inattention. So I proclaim the mercy of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and I hope I will feel his godly mercy. – M."[16]

It is worth of special attention that we can find information on the cult of saints from the studied years. The part in which saints as mediators are asked to help is another structural pattern in the texts. One example from the end of the last century:

[14] Jézus Szíve Hírnöke (Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) 1889: 28/3.
[15] For further analysation of the inner structure of narratives: BENNETT: 79–87.
[16] Jézus Szíve Hírnöke (Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) 1909: 269/5.

> "... Warm gratitude and thanks to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to Blessed Virgin Mary, to the glorious Saint Joseph, to St. Ann and St. Joachim, to the apostles of St. Peter and Paul, to St. Alphons of Liguori, to St. Charles of Borromäus, to archangel Gabriel, to my numerous patron saints, to my St. guardian angels and to every St. Angel, to the suffering spirits in Purgatory and lastly to St. Longinus..."

In most cases these texts are addressed to the other readers and that is why they were written as testimonies: telling the story of a miracle. Though a small portion is direct communication with Jesus:

> "Gy. Be blessed and admired thousands of times Sacred Heart of Jesus because you heard me and helped me with my children. Trusting you, please, keep my little son and I will make the servant of you. – Sz. F."

II. TRENDS

The second part of the analysis is the oldest approach of system-level analysis, the extrapolation of trends.[17] At this early stage in the analysis of the large material this is the most important method to be used.

1. Number of texts (Fig. 5)

Firstly I am going to investigate the numbers of texts. This chart indicates that there was a continuous decrease in the number of texts. Though I have not had statistical data yet, according to my observations the length considered to be ideal is decreasing as well during the studied period. Parallel with that, the size of the Messenger itself became smaller. From the leading newspaper of the cult, step by step it became only one among the others. Yet another periodical, The Heart, turned to be the most important.

2. Trends of saints

The investigation of the trends of mediator saints yields the most interesting result. We can find fundamental changes here as well. I consider this an indicative variable, which means that from the changes we can come to a further conclusion. If we think on the secularisation tendencies of the studied period it is not surprising, that there is a decrease either in the total numbers of saints mentioned or in the number of different saints asked to help.

As we can see, after the large amount of requests at the end of last century, around the turn of this century there is a strong decrease and there is some growing in the 20s (Fig. 6).

Further analysation can result in such a correlation which gives us a more detailed picture about this shallow theory of general secularisation. This seems to be correct if we

[17] KRIPPENDORF 1995: 38.

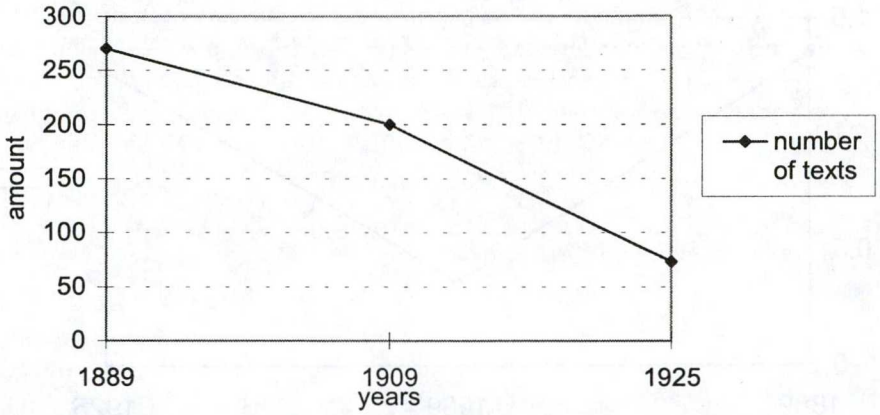

Fig. 5. Decreasing tendencies in the number of texts.

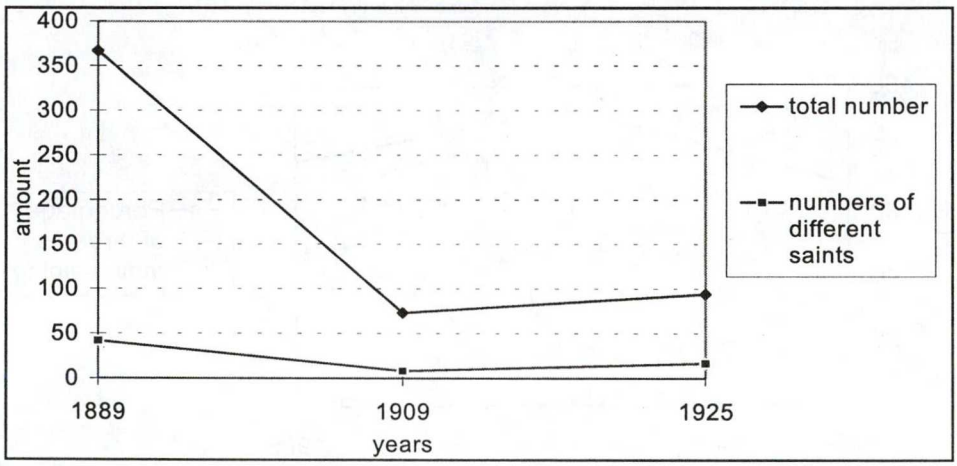

Fig. 6. Saints mentioned in the studied years

investigate how popular it was to give thanks in the Messenger. But if we count the amount of saints mentioned per texts, that is the relative frequency of the saints requested, we can have a surprising discovery shown on this chart. (Fig. 7.)

As we can see at the end of last century an average (but – of course – not existing) of 1.3 saints were mentioned in each text. In the years after the turn of the century this number decreased so much, that saints were mentioned as mediators in less than half of the texts. But in the 20s the importance of saints as mediators towards God increased to the level of the end of last century. So, the total number of texts is less than one third of the 1880s, but in this smaller amount the saints are represented at the same rate. At the turn of the century we could discover a kind of 'desanctification'.

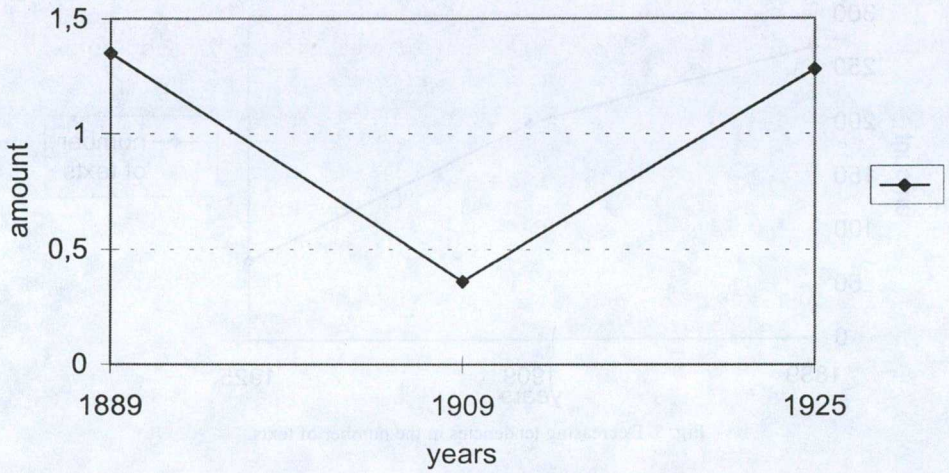

Fig. 7. Average number of saints per text

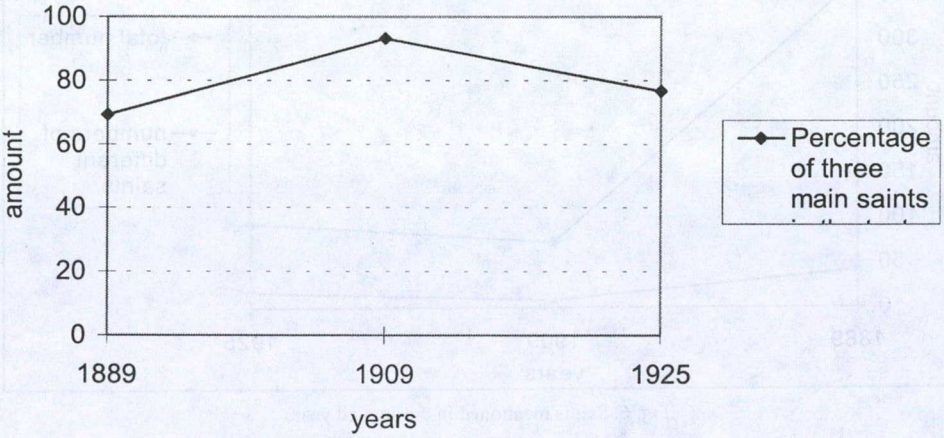

Fig. 8. Percentage of three main saints in the texts

The phenomenon was so surprising for me, that for safe analysis I decided to choose two so-called control years: the year before 1909 and the year after 1925. The investigation of the thanksgiving texts in these years yields the same result.

The investigation of the composition of the saints in each period can help us to an interpretation. The texts from the end of last century reflect a detailed cult of saints. The wide variety of the mentioned saints suggests us a regionally, socio-culturally articulated cult of saints. In the years after the turn of the century this detailed cult disappeared. Then in the 20s the vividness appeared again and in spite of the decrease of the numbers of the texts, the saints came back to use (Fig. 8).

The changes in the portion of the number of the three most important saints (Mary, Joseph and Anthony) among the mediators, indicate a change in the usage of saints. In the years after the turn of the century these main figures became useful for everything, they became helpers in any situation. This was a simplification, the earlier variety disappeared, and a kind of triviality appeared in the cult of the saints. But then what was that recovery in the 20s? What are the reasons of these changes?

We can get the answer after the analysing of the composition of saints at the two culminating points: in 1889 and in 1925. There is a restructuralisation between these two years. Only the most important saints remained in use from the end of last century in the 20s. These are mostly the same who were mentioned in the saint-less years after the turn of the century. In the 20s new, earlier unknown saints appear in the thanksgiving texts, like one of the most characteristic figures of modernity, St. Jude, the helper in impossible situations. And this century provided a number of impossible situations, so his quickly spreading cult is understandable. St. Clement Hofbauer, "apostle of Wien", appeared in the texts. He lived at the beginning of last century and had an effect on the Hungarian count, Ferenc Széchenyi. In the 20s we could follow the appearance of the cult of St. Magdalena Barat, who founded the Sacred Heart women's order/sisterhood last century. The cult of St. Theresa of Lisieux is also quickly growing. Her statues appeared in these decades in every Catholic church in Hungary. Among the disappearing mediators we can mention the guarding saints, guarding angels or the suffering spirits of Purgatory.

III. MOTIVATION

After analysing the trends we should concentrate on the intention of the texts. Through the analysis of intention we can reveal the reasons why people wrote these texts. Though we have a decreasing number of texts in the three analysed years, we have exact information about the motivation in more than half of the cases. In other cases we have only uncertain references, such as: "my request was granted", "my invocation was answered".

Sometimes it is obvious that the person thanks the Sacred Heart of Jesus for escaping from an unpleasant situation: helped "in two difficult cases", "in an embarrassing affair", "saved me for misfortune", "help in an unpleasant situation"; others thank for help: "I was given favour", "I was helped in so many cases", "my prayers through years were answered".

Among the known reasons recovering from an illness is the most frequent. Half of the texts giving concrete information were written because of that. Secondly comes thanksgiving for successful studies. Usually it is a successful exam, mainly a final exam. Rarely could we find texts thanking for the whole process of studies. Other significant reasons for gratitude are: gaining a job, solving financial problems, finding vocation or the conversion of a beloved one to Catholicism. Surprisingly only 2–4 per cent of the known intentions give thanks for "good death". As I mentioned this promise is the driving force of the movement but it is not reflected in the texts.

The Department of Ethnology has been working on the inventarisation of ex-voto pictures in the Romanian pilgrimage place, Máriaradna. After describing and photographing the pictures it is already obvious that the intention in the now analysed texts is more in connection with a secular desire, (such as gaining a job or winning an action) than that of the pictures. Is this due only to the difference in expression or to the modern form (press) and age? Do the believers expressing gratitude in the Messenger represent other socio-cultural strata than those offering a picture to a pilgrimage place giving thanks? The basic difference lies here. The two ways of expressing gratitude (traditional – modern) are used by different groups of people. As the readers of a central newspaper were different from the pilgrims visiting a pilgrimage place in the countryside, in Máriaradna.

IV. INDICATORS

According to the method of content analysis the appearance of some linguistic phenomenon can refer to some non-linguistic – thus cultural – phenomenon.[18] For example, most of the texts has a reference to the promise of public announcement:

> "according to my promise I express my gratitude publicly"
> "we fulfil our old promise, when we express our gratitude"

This kind of communication with the surrounding world has several functions, in my opinion. Firstly it is an intention of proof, similarly to the testimonies of Protestant Churches. An account put into shape is a proof of grace for the community. It has an important role also in the discourse.

> "Hereby I call everybody, who are suffering physically or spiritually to turn to the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

Holsti considers the analysis of the effects as a significant part of content-analysis. Here the effect is the continuation of the discourse:[19]

> "... I had a great suffering in my heart. Then I suddenly thought of the cases published in the Messenger about how the Sacred Heart of Jesus helped those turning to him. I myself did make a promise to announce my prayer in the Mes-

[18] KRIPPENDORF 1995: 43.

[19] My short field investigation on the cult in Nottingham, England in April 1998 resulted in a surprising evidence on the public discourse and its vitality, driving forces. In St. Barnabas Cathedral I have found the following prayer in a piece of paper near the statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. "Novena to the Sacred heart of Jesus. May the most Sacred heart of Jesus be loved, adored, praised, honoured and glorified throughout the whole world for ever and ever. Sacred heart of Jesus have mercy on us. Holy Mary mother of God pray for us. St. Theresa of the Child Jesus pray for us. St. Jude healer of the sick pray for us. St. Jude helper of the helpless pray for us. St. Jude worker of miracles hear my prayer and grant my request. Say this novena 9 times daily for 9 days leaving a copy on church every day. On the 7th day your request will be granted. IT NEVER FAILS." And the discourse continued here as well, because there was a same piece of paper, but with a further comment on the last promise of 'it never fails': "NO, BUT YOU DO!"

Fig. 9. An ex voto picture from Máriaradna (Radna, Romania) painted at the end of the last century.

> senger."[20]. "Among other visitors there was a woman, who introduced me the novena to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and brought me a Messenger to read, where I read how effective it was to make a novena for the Sacred Heart of Jesus."[21]

The faithful sometimes made special vows. The most important pledge as I mentioned was the public announcement of thanksgiving. In some cases the writers promised to order the Messenger.

[20] Jézus Szíve Hírnöke (Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) 1889: 58/1.
[21] Jézus Szíve Hírnöke (Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) 1889: 254/2.

"Some months ago I promised to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that if I was heard I would subscribe the Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus."[22]

After analysation I think there is not only a formal similarity between ex voto pictures and thanksgiving texts, but the structure, inner logic is similar as well. The heavenly power helps the person in trouble, so he feels gratitude and would like to express, announce it.

"U.....r. – Be the Godly H of J loved everywhere, because he makes mercy with his servants! I, his unworthy servant, experienced his power: my son, had spit blood for more than a year, he recovered after I made a novena for him. – N-s."[23]

I have to turn back now to the title of this paper: so these are the ex-voto texts. It seems, its origins, superficial and hidden aims, structures are very similar to that of the 'painted stories', the ex-voto pictures. In both cases the very basic driving force is either request or thanksgiving (Fig. 9).

We have to agree with Krippendorf, who compared communication to a kind of an adhesive. For the existence of the society and its communities regular and standardised communication is needed. The existence of communication strengthens its norms. In an institutional contact, the act of telling is more important than the content.[24] This is reflected in the fact that we get to know the exact intention only in half of the texts. As the trouble in which God helped was not interesting.

I have to admit that it is impossible to analyse the religiosity of single individuals, as the texts give very limited information about the writer. Though in a number of cases we could reveal the social position of the writers. We can recognise the crisis situations of the age and how was it possible to escape from them. We can discover the structure of the thanksgiving texts as well.

At the very end I have to mention that it is possible that the original, whole letters written to the editors exist somewhere in a church archive with the life histories which provide a new analysation context. But to reveal this, is a part of future research.

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[22] Jézus Szíve Hírnöke (Messenger of the Sacred Heart of Jesus) 1889: 59/1.
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SACRED CENTERS AND PRECONCEIVED JOURNEYS: INSIGHTS INTO THE CULTURAL CONSTRUCTION OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE IN ORTHODOX KARELIA

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Pilgrimage has been a recent focus of interest among anthropologists and religious studies scholars, perhaps because of the insights it can provide into our understanding of the sacred, that controversial concept so vital to our definitions of religion (e.g. ELIADE 1959, OTTO 1969) and even cultural classification (ANTTONEN 1996). Pilgrimages are generally conceived of as journeys toward some sort of sacred, and this pilgrimage goal has been conceived of as a sacred center (MORINIS 1992).

My point of departure in this paper is that the *sacred* at any given pilgrimage site is context-specific and culture-bound. Sacred messages and meanings are not inherent in the pilgrimage site itself but are constructed and transmitted both by pilgrims and by the institutions controlling the site (see EADE and SALLNOW 1991). For this reason, in order to understand the pilgrims' experience of the sacred, we need to reconstruct the processes which make the pilgrimage goal sacred rather than seek universal definitions, as some scholars have done (TURNER 1978; GOTHÓNI 1993). In order to illustrate this point, the present paper compares 'folk' and 'institutional' descriptions of pilgrimage to Orthodox Karelian monasteries prior to World War II in order to explore the different ways in which the pilgrimage experience is moulded through socialization within specific communities.

The 'image' of the sacred center in pilgrims' perceptions is constructed in part through narratives which MORINIS (1992) calls the *informational field* of the sacred center, that is, "the web of tales, legends, history and miracle stories that spins out from the sacred center" (p. 22). As used in this study, the term *informational field* refers to any narrative discourse in either oral or written form[1] which attaches particular meanings to the pilgrimage site or its features. The informational field, with which the pilgrim is familiar *prior* to his/her journey, has the potential to affect how the pilgrim perceives and

[1] Although we lack contextual information about the process by which the stories, legends, etc. were transmitted and spread, it was probably similar to that observed by anthropologist Jill DUBISCH (1990) for a pilgrimage site in present-day Orthodox Greece:

"At the same time there is also a large oral tradition, consisting of pilgrims' own experiences and those relayed to them by word of mouth, a large part of which is not found in the literature of the church. The recounting of such stories (as well as tales of unusual vows or other dramatic incidents) is a common type of exchange among pilgrims, especially at major festival times when the crowds are large and people are more likely to fall into conversation with each other" (p. 126).

experiences the sacred site: it may have a strong influence on what the pilgrim will consider noteworthy, and what will be passed over unnoticed.

It is evident, for example, that the information field affected not only the perception but also *the behavior* of the Karelian pilgrims at the sacred center. When people moved about the monastery landscape, going from place to place, their activities were influenced by what they had heard concerning the histories and characteristics of various sites. This link between legend and action is exemplified in the following folk narrative:

> Near the city of Aunus there is the Stroitsa monastery: 'Jesus built the monastery' it is said. Nearby there are chapels built on the places where Jesus sat down to rest. When the narrator was young and left with a few others to Stroitsa monastery, their parents advised them: 'Don't sit to rest anywhere else on the trip—you should sit only on those 'stones where Jesus sat', which were in the vicinity of the crosses and chapels.[2]

The informational field of the sacred center serves as the framework which guides the pilgrimage experience. Bowman, observing the behavior of pilgrims from three different religious groups in Jerusalem, puts it another way:

> ...it is at the site whence pilgrims set out on their searches for the centre that pilgrims learn what they desire to find. At the centre where they go in expectation of fulfilling that desire *pilgrims experience little other than that which they already expect to encounter* (BOWMAN 1991: 121, emphasis mine).

Much of the informational field of a pilgrimage site takes the form of historical and religious legends and miracle tales, that is, collective narratives passed from generation to generation. Hence the importance of folklore for understanding pilgrimage: it forms the primary informational field for pilgrims in an oral or semi-oral culture, and it serves as the framework which affects the pilgrims' perception and experience of the pilgrimage site once they reach it.

The different informational fields compared here suggest that between 1900 and 1940, there was a marked difference in pilgrims' perceptions and experiences between the semi-literate Orthodox Karelian 'folk'[3] and more educated Orthodox Karelians (for example, priests, church officials, teachers, journalists and seminary students). The reason for these differences, I argue, is that ways of viewing and experiencing the sacred are learned within a community.[4]

For my analysis of the 'folk' informational field, I use as my source material 106 oral narratives and anecdotes collected from three areas: Viena Karelia, Aunus Karelia

[2] Tulemajärvi, Maija Juvas 240. 1938.

[3] According to KIRKKINEN et al. (1995: 266), slightly under half of the Orthodox population was non-literate towards the end of the 19th century.

[4] In comparing the descriptions given by members of these two different communities regarding pilgrimage, the experience of Elias Lönnrot at Valamo in 1828 is a useful control. Lönnrot arrived in Valamo with no access to an informational field whatsoever: as a Lutheran 'outsider', he knew neither the folk nor the institutional tales surrounding the pilgrimage site. He had to ask the few monks who spoke Finnish for the stories behind monastery objects which any pilgrim or monk would have been familiar with (as the monk himself pointed out). Lönnrot's recorded perceptions demonstrate how strongly the experience of the 'sacred center' is influenced by the informational field: Lönnrot found the monastery only superficially interesting, and within a short time was thoroughly bored and eager to leave.

and Ladoga Karelia[5]. The majority of the texts originate from four parishes in Ladoga Karelia (Salmi, Sortavala, Suistamo and Impilahti). All of the material deals with experiences and perceptions concerning pilgrimage prior to World War II. In the following table the texts are grouped according to the time period in which they were collected:

Period collected	Number of texts
1879–1899	8
1900–1929	4
1930–1940	70
1941–1960	11
1961 (Suistamo)	7
1992[6] (Aunus Karelia)	4

As is clear from the table, the majority of the texts were collected during the period 1930–1940. The most recent year of birth for an informant (excluding the 1992 interviewees, who were elderly) was 1907. There are several points which can be made concerning the informants: first, even in the decade 1930–1940 the folk informants already represented the older (and less literate and educated) generation of Orthodox Karelians. Of the 35 informants from that period whose age we know, the average age in 1935 was 58.5 years. Secondly, the informants do not appear to have had much contact with the institutional Orthodox church or the activities organized by it. For instance, 'folk' pilgrimages were organized by the villagers themselves rather than by the Church or some other institution, and the folk laity here do not appear to be the same lay members who corresponded by letter with monks and priests at Valamo, since there is no mention in any of the descriptions of any monk or priest by name, nor any hint that the monastery brethren were familiar or known to the folk pilgrims.

While eighteen texts deal with minor or unnamed sacred centers[7], 87 texts offer information concerning the four monasteries known throughout Orthodox Karelia: Valamo

[5] In 1897, 19 236 Karelians lived in Viena Karelia (accounting for approx. 49% of the total population) and 59 281 Karelians lived in Aunus Karelia (approx. 39% of the population) (KIRKKINEN et al. 1995: 272). Of the approximately 45 000 Orthodox Karelians in Finland in the 1890s, nearly one-third lived in Ladoga Karelia (KIRKKINEN et al 1995: 266).

[6] The fieldwork was carried out in the district of Priazha in the Karelian Republic in the summers of 1991, 1992 and the autumn of 1994. In 1991, the research team consisted of Irma-Riitta Järvinen and Senni Timonen from the Foklore Archives of the Finnish Literature Society, Terhi Utriainen from the Academy of Finland and Nina Lavonen and Aleksandra Stepanova from the Karelian Academy of Sciences, Petrozavodsk. Seppo Seppälä documented the research on videotape. In 1992 the research team consisted of Irma-Riitta Järvinen, Nina Lavonen and Senni Timonen, and in 1994 it consisted of Irma-Riitta Järvinen, Nina Lavonen, Senni Timonen and Terhi Utriainen. The video and tape-recorded material from all field seasons is located in the Tape Recording Archive of the Finnish Literature Society, Helsinki.

[7] *Kelja monastery*: Impilahti. KRK 143. Juho Kuronen 1; Impilahti. KT 129. Juho Kuronen 45. 1936; *Antrei Antrayski's monastery*: Salmi. Ulla Manonen 1135. 1936 and 4716. 1937; *Orusjärvi monastery*: Salmi. M. Pelkonen 306. 1935–40; Salmi. Th. Schwindt VK 89: 56. 1879; Priazha. SKSÄ 121. 1992; *Säntämäki monastery*: Makslahti. Ulla Manonen 1139. 1936; *Heinisenmaa monastery*: Sortavala. Th. Schwindt VK 89: 55. 1879; *Vahvajärvi island*: Ruskeala. 1939. Anna Mustajärvi PK 29: 5302. – Anna Auvinen, born 1870; Ruskeala<Impilahti. 1939. Eino Toiviainen 550. – Juho Silvennoinen.

in Ladoga Karelia (43 texts); Solovetski in Archangel Karelia (16 texts)[8]; Konevitsa in Ladoga Karelia (11 texts), and The Holy Trinity of Svir (usually referred to as Stroitsa in the folklore) in Aunus Karelia (9 texts). Eight additional texts each contain information about two or more of these monasteries together.

For my discussion of the institutional informational field, I use as my source material 37 descriptions of pilgrimage and/or monasteries appearing between 1901 and 1939 in the Finnish Orthodox periodical *Aamun Koitto*. Thirty-three of the descriptions deal with pilgrimage to Valamo or experiences at this sacred center, one is a description of Konevitsa monastery, one describes both Valamo and Konevitsa, and two deal with impressions of Lintula convent. The authors of the descriptions were one of three types: 1) literate, educated pilgrims or visitors to the sacred center who described their own personal impressions; 2) members of a group[9] who had visited the monastery and who wrote on behalf of all participants; and 3) group trip organizers such as parish priests or teachers. These organizers sometimes included such information as their hopes and aims for the trip, evaluations as to its success and advice for future organizers. A significant number of the authors were church intellectuals and activists (RAIVO 1993: 116).

The folk narratives and *Aamun Koitto* descriptions exhibit some basic structural differences: the published descriptions are usually much longer and organize the pilgrimage events in chronological order or logically according to theme. The folk descriptions are shorter and more haphazard in their approach to the subject, often illuminating only one or several aspects of the pilgrimage experience rather than recounting the entire sequence of events.

CONCRETE VERSUS SPIRITUAL SACRED

Historians have noted that at various times and places Christian pilgrimage has been conceived of as a spiritual exercise, an imitation of Christ and his Saints (DAVIES 1988: 184–202), and some anthropologists have likewise tended to emphasize pilgrimage as a form of communication with the divine which allows the pilgrim to deepen his/her relation with the Supreme Being (PRESTON 1992: 45), or experience a spiritual transforma-

[8] Valamo and Solovetski in particular were major goals for pilgrimage – In the mid-19th century, Solovetski attracted between ten and fifteen thousand pilgrims each summer, while during the same period, Valamo drew eight thousand visitors annually (KOHONEN 1983: 36), five thousand alone on the feast day of its founders Sergei and Herman (DAVIES 1988: 136). In the 1930s, Valamo attracted approximately 3000 Orthodox pilgrims annually, while the number of Lutheran 'visitors' grew steadily from 6000 to 21 000 annually between the years 1930 and 1938 (KILPELÄINEN 1994: 389).

[9] Groups included, among others: members of the Ilomantsi Orthodox congregation, members of the Viipuri Orthodox congregation, members of the Salmi Orthodox parish congregation (180 not counting children), the Salmi church choir, the youth of the Suistamo Orthodox congregation, the youth of Korpiselkä Orthodox congregation, pupils of the Soanlahti primary school, pupils and teachers of the Suojärvi primary school, Sunday-school children of Sortavala, the pupils of the Christian primary school of Korpiselkä parish, participants of the Sortavala drawing course, students of the Orthodox Priest Seminary of Sortavala, the Orthodox students graduated from the Travelling Teachers' Preparatory Institute, the officers of the Finnish 2nd division, members of the Lotta-Svärd (Women's Auxiliary) Association, and members of the Ministry of Transport and the Committee on Appropriations.

tion (GOTHÓNI 1993: 108). Here I intend 'spiritual' to refer to an inner process of self-examination in a personal, intimate relationship with God. In the written descriptions of pilgrimage in *Aamun Koitto*, this sort of spirituality is a key theme: salvation, inner spiritual improvement, and the personal emotional experiences of the divine are all mentioned repeatedly in the written reports:

> Blessed are these moments! The people's group prayer amidst the relics of the saints moves powerfully, it fills the air, it melts even the hard heart, imprisons it, takes in into its sacred care, and elevates its life and world to the courts of Heaven, where everything low and unclean is shut out. ...its familiar and sublime melody speaks to the soul of a lost paradise, the finding of which is the goal of human life. Having found it, the happy person moves on to eternity. The monastery strives to help people in this search.[10]

Karelian folk narratives, however, do not address these motives. There is no mention of a longing for a closer union with God or individual spiritual growth, no self-reflection or even mention the afterlife.

We do not know whether folklore collectors ever asked folk informants about their intimate religious experiences, but it is clear that the informants viewed the collectors' questions and conversations as open-ended, given the great diversity of information they provided. People did not only tell collectors their folklore repertoires but also recounted their personal and idiosyncratic experiences during pilgrimage. In these accounts I do not find, even by reading between the lines, any definite indications of a 'spiritual' perception of the pilgrimage event and sacred center.

In so far as language is the only key to the experiences and perceptions of other persons and we are unable to speculate on what may or may not have been left unsaid by informants, I suggest that the Karelian folk narratives concerning monasteries and pilgrimage demonstrate the folk informants' interest in a *tangible* sacredness rather than a *mystical* one.

The act of pilgrimage was portrayed in concrete rather than spiritual terms, through descriptions of physical sensations rather than inner revelations. What was stressed were often mundane, touristic experiences of the trip such as meeting and talking to people, admiring the scenery, taking home souvenirs, arranging accommodation and of course, eating: how much food cost, if you had to bring your own, or as one narrator pointed out, the fact that at Valamo you could eat as much pea soup and drink as much tea as you wanted for the first three days.[11]

For the 'folk', sacred persons connected to the monasteries were 'holy' not because of their inner spirituality but because they were associated with supernatural control over the *natural* environment (they sailed across water on rocks, cured diseases,[12] fed multi-

[10] "At the Harbour of Peace", AK 1937, no. 34: 257–8. – M. Michailov.

[11] Vienan Karjala. Santtu Marttinen b) 18. 1926; Vieljärvi. Artturi Railonsala 3397. 1947; Salmi. M. Pelkonen 266. 1935–40; Priazha. SKSÄ 111. 1992.

[12] Salmi. 1935–40. M. Pelkonen 448. – Miikkul Izrikki, 69 years; Makslahti. 1936. Ulla Mannonen 1139. – Martta Kuha, 54 years; Salmi. 1934. Martti Haavio 1700. – Nastja Rantsi, 49 years.

tudes single-handedly,[13] or their buildings built themselves overnight[14]) or over the *supernatural*: they drove out demons,[15] for example. While guile and trickery were characteristics attributed to mythical sacred persons in several instances (young monk saves monastery from destruction by Swedish king,[16] Sergei and Herman gain control over island[17]), saintly qualities such as kindness, mercy, or charity were mentioned in only one narrative.[18]

People were not interested in the 'spiritual' activities of holy figures, they were interested in the evidence of their material existence and concrete acts. Pilgrimage sites were not places to *meet* the Supreme Being, they were places to *observe traces* of his former presence or the presence of the saints or founders, to honor and remember them. Much of the folk interest in pilgrimage in Karelia can thus be regarded as a kind of cult of traces. The acts of sacred persons were made concrete by the fact that they were imprinted onto the topography, 'set in stone' so to speak[19]:

> 'The old people also said that Jesus himself has visited Valamo'. There on the rocks it is possible to see the footprints of holy Jesus. They remained there as an eternal reminder of the time when Jesus visited Valamo. – Man, 78 years.[20]
>
> ...Those stones on which the founders of [Konevitsa] monastery sailed to the island can be seen in the monastery yard. They are about 1/2 meter long and on each of them there are two big hollows, just where a person's knees would fit. It seems that the men were on the stone for so long that their knees pressed into the stone. – Man, 51 years.[21]
>
> Oleksei Svirskii [Aleksanteri Syväriläinen] was a holy man. He ground flour with three handmills at once: with both hands and one foot. When he knelt on the rocks to pray, the imprints of his knees and hands remained there. He sailed on a stone over the lake and didn't drown. In his memory the monastery of Oleksei Svirskii on the eastern shore of Lake Ladoga was founded. – Woman, 47 years.[22]
>
> The story tells that the founders of Valamo monastery, Sergei and Herman, had sailed to Valamo archipelago on a rock and then founded the monastery there, and I have

[13] Impilahti. 1936. Sanni Tiensuu a) 102. – Maria Mäntylä b. 1882.

[14] Virtaranta (1964: 181–2); Porajärvi. 1936. L. Laiho 4022. – Maksima Jevlovna, b. 1863; Suistamo. 1939. J. Hautala 969. – Ivan Tajakka, 70 years; Salmi. 1935–40. M. Pelkonen 448. – Miikkul Izrikki, 69 years.

[15] Pyhäjärvi V. 1. Yrjö Kinnari KRK 126: 256. – Heikki Kuranen, 51 years; Sortavala. 1938. Juho Saikkonen 6; Sortavala. 1938. Juho Saikkonen KT 136: 94; Kangasniemi. 1894. Henrik Laitinen vol. 1: 122; Makslahti. 1936. Ulla Mannonen 1134. – Martta Kuha, 54 years; Salmi. 1938. Mikko Mikkonen KT 131: 190. – J. A. Mikkonen; Joensuu. 1938. Maria Pitkänen PK 31: 5643. – Heikki Koponen, b. 1892.

[16] Salmi. 1936. Pekka Pohjanvalo 17. – Jaakko Ahokas, 75 years.

[17] In this story the founders, Sergei and Herman, were given permission to take for themselves a piece of land on the island as big as a cowhide, which they cut up into little pieces and scattered over the whole island, thus gaining possession of it (Sortavala mlk. 1953. Sanakirjasäätiön välityksellä. Evald Hyppönen 1292; Impilahti > Sortavala. 1935–6. Toiviainen, Eino KRK 154: 11, Sortavala. 1935. Juho Hyvärinen KRK 141: 203).

[18] Salmi. M. Pelkonen 269. 1935–40.

[19] Sortavala. KT 137. Selma Saikkonen 120. 1936; Impilahti. Sanni Tiensuu a) 102. 1936; Priazha. SKSÄ 113. 1992.

[20] Suistamo. Siiri Oulasmaa a) 6209. 1961.

[21] Pyhäjärvi (Karelian Isthmus) V. 1. KRK. Yrjö Kinnari 256.

[22] Salmi. 1946. O. Harju 3868.

heard that the rock is somewhere preserved for the public to see, somewhere on an island called 'Pyhäsaari' at Valamo. – Woman, 65 years.[23]

...And when more people, forty men, came to [join the founder at the monastery], this holy hermit had fed them all by grounding the flour alone with a hand-held grinding stone, baking the bread alone, enough for all the people, and still having time to do other work. And there are still the imprints where his knees wore into the rock from praying. And he also had time to sleep, since there is the imprint of his head, shoulders, hips and heels, all worn into his stone bed. All of these could be seen at the hermit cottage. The narrator saw them with her own eyes when visiting, and had heard the story. – Woman, 54 years.[24]

TWO DIFFERENT VIEWS OF 'SIN'

Midway through the 1930s, a new theme began to appear in the *Aamun Koitto* pilgrimage descriptions: this was an emphasis on sin, on the smallness and unworthiness of humanity and a need for inner cleansing and forgiveness. This theme occurred frequently in the descriptions between 1935 and 1939:

One of the more beautiful parts of our trip was participating in the Holy Communion. We felt ourselves to be deeply sinful and helpless beings.[25]

All of us went to confess our sins.

...there was a desire to be released from the heavy weight of conscience.

...The more we familiarized ourselves with the sights of the monastery, the more powerfully we felt our own worthlessness and insignificance. On Saturday evening at Absolution we recognized our sinfulness and in our hearts regretted our deeds, and yesterday at Communion we felt we had received a great blessing and forgiveness.

...I heard a certain elderly woman give a summary of the trip: "Now it feels so good, when the burden of sin no longer weighs heavy."[26]

The visit to Gethsemane, where Jesus had prayed and had sweated drops of blood on behalf of us worthless sinners, in front of this picture each one of us must have felt themselves so small and sinful.[27]

I remain in the church, at the foot of Christ's holy cross even after the service is over, calling out from a deep maelstrom of sin: "Take unto yourself, Oh my Liberator, my repentance, allow me, a sinner, to clean your holy feet with my hot tears of repentance."[28]

[23] Salmi. KRK Pekka Pohjanvalo 143.
[24] Impilahti. Sanni Tiensuu a) 102. 1936. – Maria Mäntylä, b. 1882.
[25] "A Pilgrimage to Valamo", AK 1936. no. 37: 292. – participant.
[26] "Concerning the Church's Work Among the Youth', AK 1937, no. 36: 274–5.
[27] "On a Pilgrimage to Valamo", AK 1938, no. 40: 315. – Veera Patrikainen.
[28] "Travel Memoirs from the Lintula Nunnery", AK 1935, no. 11: 86. – Lucia Palin.

> Perhaps the memory most sacred and dear to all of the course participants was the common Absolution and taking part in the sacrament of Holy Communion. I will never forget the moment at which I was able to unburden all of my sins in front of God, to tell him of my troubles and repent. The beautiful advice of the confessor struck the sensitive chords of my soul so forcefully that tears of cleansing rolled freely down my cheeks. I felt that the hands of God came over me and blessed me, and that he had given peace to my stormy soul.[29]

In these 'institutional' descriptions, sin is a matter between the individual and God, representing a lack of spiritual depth or responsiveness toward God. The folk narratives also talk about sin, but here sin was conceived of as a wrongful act against other persons or a crime against the laws of the community, and it was a matter between the individual and society (although social norms were largely based on Christian concepts of morality). There is no evidence from the narratives that the concept of sin had any implications for the personal relationship between God and the individual:

> Our mother went to school at Orusjärvi monastery. Mama was a quick learner. She told us that it was the kind of place where the people walked on dry land to the monastery, but every now and then the water rose. There were two nice boys there fulfilling a vow because of their sins, one had gotten a girl pregnant but had not married her. Many people went there because of their own sins.[30]

In the folk narratives, the person is aware of his or her sinfulness *before* the pilgrimage visit, whereas the *Aamun Koitto* narratives suggest that it was only at the sacred center that pilgrims became fully aware of their 'burden of sin'. In the *Aamun Koitto* narratives, the concept of sin is God-centered: it is God who by his mercy sees fit to lift the burden of sin: there is no talk of *earning* this forgiveness. The emphasis in the written narratives is on confession, self-examination and 'feeling' sin-laden or relieved through repentance. In the folk narratives, on the other hand, the individual and God were often seen to be in a concrete *exchange relationship*, sin was a debt which could be paid by making a journey to the pilgrimage goal. The idea that sin could be 'paid off' was part of a larger folk worldview in which pilgrimage was seen not as a spiritual transformation but as a type of *transaction* with a specific aim or reward in mind. As with any transaction, there were costs which could be measured in terms of time, energy (traveling was usually on foot) and even money:

> Visiting Solovetski required a very large amount of money. – Woman, 69 years.[31]

> From here to the holy city [Solovetski] it's 36 leagues and it's so holy that people go to stay there for three years, on a vow.[32]

29 "Reminiscences from Sunday School Courses", AK 1936, no. 37: 290. – Olga Majuri.
30 Priazha. SKSÄ 121. 1992.
31 Salmi. M. Pelkonen 268. 1935–40.
32 Kiimasjärvi. R. Engelberg 1159.

This pilgrimage 'exchange' was usually framed in the form of a 'vow'.[33] Making this type of sacred vow or promise was known variously in Karelian dialects as *jeäkseijä, jeäksevüö, jeäksie*, among others.[34] The vow could entail a pilgrimage made before God, Jesus, the saint or monastery founder had fulfilled his[35] part of the bargain (for example in order to seek a cure) or *only after the cure had been granted*:[36]

> At thirty years of age my eyes became ill, I didn't see God's light, and in those times a neighbor woman also got a swelling disease. And so we decided to make a vow: we would go to Solovetski on foot, which is a distance of about 800 versts. We vowed to God that we would visit Solovetski on foot, if we recovered in a week's time. Towards the end of the week I began to see again—and my eyes were soon completely healthy, and the neighbor woman recovered as well. Then we left on our promised journey. At the beginning of the trip there weren't any others who were going there, but at the place called Poventsa there were already about 500 persons. Finally we arrived at Solovetski monastery, and it was grand—more beautiful and bigger than Valamo, we prayed there every day for two weeks.[37]

Children could also be 'promised' to a monastery if they recovered from misfortune, and a 'substitute' pilgrim could make the pilgrimage journey in order to seek a cure for someone else too ill to travel. In these cases it appears that the pilgrimage was perceived more as the fulfilment of a bargain than the deepening of the pilgrim's spirituality:

> When a child was promised to a monastery because a miracle cure had occurred in their case, this was called *jiäksentä*. From then on it was said of the child 'this child has been *jiäkseity* [promised in a religious vow]". Boy children were promised to Valamo, girl children to Lintula convent. – Woman, 68 years.[38]

> When a person was seriously ill and was not capable of going themselves to the monastery, to Valamo or Solovetski, then another went in their place to those sacred places to pray for a cure. That substitute traveller was *jiäkseity*. One had to make the entire trip to those sacred places by foot, all of the land stages by foot. One was allowed to make the water journeys, which had to be made when going to Valamo and Solovetski, by boat. There wasn't any other choice, since the monasteries could only be reached by water. – Woman.[39]

33 EADE and SALLNOW (1991) also draw attention to the 'exchange' ethic of pilgrimage: "In most cases, the dominant motive for going on a pilgrimage is to request some favor of God or the shrine divinity in return for simply having made the journey or for engaging in ancillary devotional exercises...Using the shrine divinity as a mediator, physical suffering and penance are exchanged for material and spiritual favors, contracts are forged with the saints, sin is amortized by means of a tariff of devotional or ascetic practices..." (p. 24).

34 Karjalan Kielen Sanakirja, p. 495.

35 The sacred persons associated with monasteries in Orthodox Karelia are in nearly all cases male.

36 See also: Uhtua. 1894. K. F. Karjalainen, Karelian Lexical Archives, The Research Institute for the Languages of Finland.

37 Impilahti. PK 5258. Mikko Jaakkola 1938

38 Suistamo. 1959. Siiri Oulasmaa E 241: 132. – Anna Votkin (formerly Kalevainen), 68 years.

39 Suistamo. 1959. Siiri Oulasmaa E 246: 213–214, told by Parakeeva Makkonen.

SACRED PERSON AND SACRED PLACE

In the *Aamun Koitto* pilgrimage descriptions the most frequently-appearing theme was *sacredness of place* expressed in romantic terms: specifically, the beauty and tranquility of Valamo's natural surroundings (see also RAIVO 1994). In the written descriptions from *Aamun Koitto*, the sacred place does not need a sacred person in order to justify its sacredness. The qualities it embodies are sufficient for its status as a sacred center—it becomes personified, the protagonist of the monastery:

> The sea, the vast sea, is before my eyes. The evening sun is setting. It brings its golden glitter to the glassy surface of the water. At this moment I am on a rocky spit of land in the Ladoga archipelago. A sweet peace settles in my soul. I have broken away from the bustle and dust of the city and am now happy as I gaze upon God's magnificent nature. It is quiet.[40]

> It was a beautiful autumn day. The sun sent its gold to the peaceful surface of Ladoga's waters, along which, quietly but surely, sailed a small boat... Thousands of visitors hasten to gaze upon Lake Ladoga. They want to enjoy the stillness of this island, in the bosom of nature. In the evenings they want to hear the twittering of the birds and the ringing of the monastery bells.
>
> ...Beautiful and charming were the surroundings...and what of Lake Ladoga itself, how did it appear? Majestic, it stood. It neither surged nor thundered but calmly stretched its protective wings as far as the eye could see. Peacefully it received us and promised to take us safely to the harbor of peace.[41]

> I stand and gaze at this ideal Finnish landscape. My eyes are caressed and my heart delighted by the view. The bay is glassy calm. Only here and there do the fishes dance and shatter the calm of the water's surface. In looking at this beauty, one is put under its spell, from which it is difficult to break free. It is still and calm...
>
> ...—My friend! When you visit Valamo with its apple and cherry trees, its lilacs in full bloom, then go out when the sun is setting, stand and listen, and from the nearby woods you will hear the nightingale sing. It is already worth the trouble of coming to Valamo, if you have not heard this rare bird in your own home district.[42]

> The magnificent nature draws people to God. The vast sea, sometimes glassy calm, at other times ill-tempered and stormy, the rugged shore cliffs and ancient woods speak to them of God's great and good works.[43]

> The cloudless sky, like a giant vault of blue, arches over us. The ship's mast, gilded by the sun, sparkles in the air. The restful waters reflect islands, villages and forests from their endlessly clear surface, forming an enchanting picture the likes of which could not be created by any mortal artist.[44]

[40] "Summer Reminiscences of Valamo", AK 1919, no. 15: 127. – A – a.

[41] "A Trip to Valamo monastery", AK 1923, no. 21: 164, . – Student at Sortavala Orthodox College for Priests.

[42] "The Nightingales of Valamo", AK 1925 no. 14: 130.

[43] "Valamo, the Pearl of the Ladoga", AK 1927, no. 13, 14: 165. – E. J. Ellilä, Kansan Kuvalehti.

[44] "At the Harbour of Peace", AK 1937, no. 34: 257. – M. Michailov.

> We gazed upon and admired the landscapes, each more beautiful than the last, which opened up before our eyes. We knew ourselves to be in the most beautiful chamber in the nature of our motherland, at the centuries-old pilgrimage center of the Karelians. Apple and cherry trees bloomed in well-protected and well cared-for orchards...Lilacs and roses spread their lovely fragrance and colorful glory, the birds sang, and almost nowhere else is their safety so guaranteed as in the forests of Valamo. Water birds seemed tame because they let people come so close.
>
> ...Lake Ladoga was at rest, a peaceful, almost glittering expanse of beauty. Everywhere one looked, one could see the most beautiful ideal Finnish landscape sparkling in the sunlight.
>
> "Child of Finland, do not barter away your lovely land..."
>
> —These lines by Topelius came to my mind as if of their own will.[45]

Similar descriptions can be found for Konevitsa monastery:

> We drank water from sacred springs, gazed at the beautiful, well cared-for woods and fields of grain, and admired the lovely sandy beaches and other scenery. The order, cleanliness and peacefulness of everything we saw made a singularly good impression on us trip participants and will remain unforgotten in our memories.[46]

In the 'folk' informational field on the other hand, *sacred persons* form the most important thematic element of the oral tales, while the sacred place is sacred only through the person of the founder, saint or God whose presence has in some way transformed it.

Sacred persons in the folk narratives tend to be mythologized and associated with supernatural power: in the numerous legends in which monastery founders are said to have originally sailed to the monasteries on flat rocks or millstones, a conceptual link is made between the sacred person and the mythical/supernatural: giants and witches also sailed on flat rocks in Finnish tales (HAAVIO 1936). As mentioned earlier, sacred persons were also associated with supernatural control over both the *natural* and *supernatural* environments.

But despite this mythologization, there existed close, personal relations between pilgrims and sacred monastery persons just as there did between Orthodox Karelians and saints in everyday life. In Orthodox Karelian folk religion the saint was concrete (usually equated with his or her icon), human and intimately involved with the lives of his/her devotees. Saints were seen to have their own miraculous powers which they could use for good or bad. Folk legends were told about the lives and deeds of the saints in ways that made the saint more human, capable of making mistakes, and in the case of St. Nikolaos (Miikkula), the most popular Karelian saint, the legends described him as caring and concerned, a merciful saint whose help was always near.[47] This intimate relationship

[45] "The Valamo Trip made by the Pupils of Soanlahti Primary School 18–19.6. 1925", AK 1925, no. 14: 129.

[46] "The Salmi Church Choir's Trip to the Monasteries of Konevitsa and Valamo", AK 1939, no. 29: 225. – D. K.

[47] Salmi. 1935–40. M. Pelkonen 410. – Johor Lammas the elder; Suistamo. 1936. Martta Kähmi 75; Aunus. 1938. Niilo Leppänen 301; Porajärvi. 1943. Helmi Helminen 1898. – Ivan Hermonen, 75 years; Sammatus. 1943. Helmi Helminen 1818. – Paraskovja Kurshijev, born 1886.

meant that people could even make jokes about the saint: in one village in Salmi, people said playfully that Miikkula had stolen flour from the mill, since it appeared from his icon that he had flour on his beard.[48]

The characteristics ascribed to Miikkula in Orthodox Karelia—mercy, leniency, immediate assistance in times of trouble—resemble those often associated with the Virgin Mary/Mother of God in Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox cultures. In 1988, anthropologist Jill Dubisch heard the following legend in present-day Greece while researching pilgrimage on the Cycladic island of Tinos, home of a miracle-working icon of the Mother of God:

> In the summer of 1988... I heard the following story while I was standing with a group of pilgrims just outside the church. A child who had been 'vowed' to the Madonna had fallen overboard from a ship on its way to Tinos. The ship had not turned around but had sailed on. However, the Madonna was watching over the child, and it was picked up by another ship which was passing by and brought to the church. When the grieving parents arrived, they found the child waiting for them beside the icon (DUBISCH 1990: 126).

In a Karelian version of this Orthodox legend-type, it is Miikkula who saves a child dedicated to Valamo monastery: during the boat journey to Valamo with its mother, the child falls overboard during a storm. Upon reaching the monastery, the mother goes directly to Miikkula's icon, crying and praying, at which point the child, alive and well, miraculously appears sitting on the altar.[49]

In Orthodox Karelia people maintained close, reciprocal relationships with various saints. The obligations of the human devotees included lighting candles in front of the saints' icons, bringing offerings or gifts of food, alcoholic drink, wool, linen or butter, sacrificing animals in the saints' honor, or leaving the 'last' portion of some grain crop unharvested or unthreshed as an offering to the saint.[50] Obligations of the saint, in turn, ranged from granting a large catch of fish or luck in hunting, helping the grain or other crops to grow, protecting cattle from predators, giving protection and aid against disease, etc.

Not fulfilling one's part of the exchange bargain could result in punishment by the saint: if one did not honor the patron saint of the local chapel in the proper way, the saint could punish that person with an accident or illness. Sometimes a sorcerer could tell the victim if the misfortune was caused by the saint[51], in other cases the disease's origin was revealed in a dream. It was then necessary to go immediately to the shrine, light candles and bring gifts, money, and/or food in order to appease the saint.

[48] Salmi. 1935–40. M. Pelkonen 414. – Anni Spiridonantytär Lammas, formerly Herranen; Salmi. 1935–40. M. Pelkonen 413. – Johro Lammas the elder.

[49] Aunus. 1938. N. Leppänen 301.

[50] Vuokkiniemi. 1901. O. Marttini III. 608, Karelian Lexical Archives, The Research Institute for the Languages of Finland; Suistamo. 1930. R. E. Nirvi, Karelian Lexical Archives, The Research Institute for the Languages of Finland.

[51] Suojärvi. 1941. Viktor Hankka 88; Oulu. 1930. Samuli Paulaharju 13732. Anni Lehtonen, 50 years; Säämäjärvi. 1928–9. E. V. Ahtia, Karelian Lexical Archives, The Research Institute for the Languages of Finland.

According to one informant, if someone in Orthodox Karelia prayed to Saint Miikkula before leaving on a journey and promised to give money to the church if the journey were successful, but then failed to give the promised amount, it was believed that Saint Miikkula was likely to become angry and take his payment anyway: the person's cow or horse might die, or the person might sicken.[52]

As mentioned earlier, vows or promises involving pilgrimage and monasteries were also part of this exchange relationship. Pilgrimage journeys were made in connection with a miraculous healing or some other divine favor. In one brief description given in Viena Karelia, a man prayed to the "god" Izotei Savatei (Savvati Solokkalainen, founder of Solovetski monastery) and promised that if his wife gave birth to a son, he would make the journey to Solovetski.[53]

Therefore, even though sacred centers are always technically *places*, their sacredness in the folk narratives depended on their connection to a sacred person or persons. In many cases pilgrimages represented a continuation of the reciprocal relationships that people carried out with sacred persons in everyday life.

The mythologized *sacred person* so important in the folk narratives is absent in the *Aamun Koitto* descriptions of pilgrimage and Valamo monastery. There are no stories of saints or holy men who left their traces at the monastery, no tales of miracles performed by these sacred persons. There are no references to close or reciprocal relations with any sacred persons. Occasionally anecdotal references are made to the recent acts of historical figures, but these stories differ from those recounted in the folk narratives. *Thus even when tales of important persons were used in the Aamun Koitto discourse, the authors drew on a different set of cultural lore than did the 'folk'.* A popular tale in the written descriptions concerns the meeting between Russian emperor Alexander I and the hermit Nikolai, of which I have found three nearly identical versions presented by authors in *Aamun Koitto*, but which was not mentioned by a single folk informant:

> This insignificant hut is nonetheless important for the fact that the [Russian] emperor Alexander I paid a visit there on his trip to Valamo in August of 1819. The delighted hermit offered his noble guest the best he had, namely turnips from his own herb garden. The emperor took one of them. When a knife began to be sought in order to clean off the skin of the turnip. the emperor said: "I am a soldier and I eat like a soldier", and began to peel the turnip with his teeth.[54]

> The great lord, emperor Alexander I, came to greet the hermit Nikolai. The old man received him hospitably and offered the emperor a turnip which he had grown. He started to look for a knife to give to his guest to peel and cut the turnip, but his guest said, "I am a soldier" and bit off a piece of the turnip.[55]

> In 1819 the emperor Alexander I came here to visit the old man. The ruler had conversed for a long time with the hermit concerning the great questions of their faith. The

[52] Salmi. 1937. Ulla Mannonen 4982. – Martta Kuha 54 years.

[53] Tulemajärvi. 1942. Helmi Helminen. – Solomanida Petrov, born 1862, Karelian Lexical Archives, The Research Institute for the Languages of Finland.

[54] "The Hermit's Hut", AK 1901, no. 6: 51.

[55] "The Trip to Valamo made by the Students of the Sortavala Drawing Course", AK 1924, no. 16: 126.

> old monk had offered the emperor a turnip from his own garden, and when he did not happen to have a knife handy, the emperor peeled the turnip with his teeth, saying, "I'm a soldier and eat like a soldier too".[56]

Other stories of historical and contemporary figures connected to the monastery include the following:

> In the same graveyard we come to the grave of the Swedish king [Magnus], whose rectangular headstone tells a piece of this king's life history: King Magnus was saved from a shipwreck by floating on a piece of the ship to Valamo, and there he converted to the Orthodox faith and died a monk.[57]

> When he had to leave, the Archbishop [of Sweden] suggested to the hermit [Father Ephrem] that it might be good to offer the Lord a prayer together. What followed was a unique event: the hermit of Valamo dressed in his *skeema* clothing and the head of the Swedish Lutheran church knelt devoutly side by side in front of the King's door and began to pray in a low voice to their common Father in Heaven (...) It was a wonderful moment (...) At the end of the 16th century the chief of the Swedish troops of war, Pontus de la Gardie, completely destroyed Valamo monastery, and stained the rocks of the monastery island with the blood of hermits in killing nearly 80 monks. Now a hermit of Valamo and the supreme shepherd of the Swedish people knelt together in front of the greatness of God...Such is the power of love.[58]

If we compare these anecdotes, it is clear that they all have something important in common: they tell of historical figures of authority who, upon visiting Valamo, relinquish some of the social distance between their own rank and that of the monks. It is implicit in the tales that this new intimacy between authority figure and monks arises out of the leader's respect for the way of life represented by monks. We may view these stories as a form of discourse propagated by the monks at Valamo, but their adoption by the *Aamun Koitto* authors suggests that this theme, in which the sacred center commands interest and respect from other political and religious powers, was useful to the Karelian intellectuals and activists of the Finnish Orthodox Church. In the difficult and uncertain times experienced by Karelian Orthodoxy following Finland's independence in 1917–1918, legends recounting meetings between the monastery and other political and religious powers created a 'tradition' which could be held up as a model for contemporary encounters.

The persons who populate the descriptions in *Aamun Koitto* to the greatest extent, however, are the monks, priests and Igumens with whom the pilgrims came into contact. What they said and did, how they acted towards the pilgrims, is a topic *which is not dealt with at all in the folk narratives* but which is stressed in the published descriptions. Accordingly, the emphasis moves away from the *mythic* sacred person toward the

[56] "Valamo, Pearl of the Ladoga", AK 1927, no. 13–14: 164. – E. J. Ellilä, Kansan Kuvalehti.

[57] "The Valamo Trip made by the Pupils of Soanlahti Primary School 18–19.6. 1925", AK 1925, no. 14: 129.

[58] "The Swedish Archbishop and Natan Söderblom at Valamo" AK 1927, no. 20: 250–252. – S. Solntsev.

romanticized sacred place and the *role of actual persons*, reconstructing the sacred to be relevant for contemporary issues, especially those of ethnic, linguistic, geographic and religious *identity*, which are also found in abundance in the *Aamun Koitto* descriptions but which are never mentioned in the folk narratives concerning pilgrimage and monasteries (see below).

CULTURAL IDEALS DISPLAYED AT THE PILGRIMAGE SITE

MORINIS (1992) has suggested that the 'sacred' at the pilgrimage center "arises from the collective investment in the *ideals* that are enshrined [in it]" (p. 6, emphasis mine). Sacred centers are 'cultural capitals' which develop and project

> an image that is a magnification of some accepted ideals in the culture. They represent a higher or purer or more ideal version of what the potential pilgrim already values and seeks by dint of membership in a culture (p. 18).

Orthodox pilgrims were offered a showcase where cultural (but not necessarily spiritual) ideals were 'displayed' both visually and through the informational field, where pilgrims could select from a number of ideals in constructing a coherent view of their own cultural continuity and values.

For the folk pilgrim, the sacred center showcased an array of different ideals which could even be contradictory. These ideals had a single common denominator: they were expressed in a highly concrete manner, stressing visual and tactile details. One apparently conflicting set of ideals was the simultaneous emphasis on ascetic poverty and conspicuous wealth. Asceticism as an ideal is clear from the tales of 'holy hermits' (see also LAITILA 1995):

> ...They went to the island [Valamo] and there they made themselves a cave in the earth. There they prayed to the Creator. They didn't have any food there, no water, not even fire. They were just there in the cave in the earth. Nobody there came to visit them, nor did anyone know that there was somebody there. They dedicated themselves to God's will there and the Holy Spirit went to give them food. That's how they survived. And they didn't want anything more than water and bread, and some salt...[59]

> ...In the beginning their food was berries from the forest, their bed the bare earth and their pillow a stone. Finally some fishermen found them and brought them some seeds to plant grain. Sergei and Herman began to cultivate a little land. They ground the grain with handmills. The Russian Karelian refugee said that these stories really happened.[60]

> Antrei Antrayski [Andrian Ontrusovalainen] was a hermit, a holy man, who lived in the woods, tortured himself with fasting and dedicated his life to worshipping God...[61]

[59] Aunus > Salmi. J. Hautala and L. Simonsuuri SKSÄ A 133. 1938.
[60] Suojärvi. J. Koivunen KT 128: 8. 1936.
[61] Salmi. Ulla Manonen 1135. 1936.

This ideal is also clear from the tale told by a Valamo monk to Elias Lönnrot on his visit to Valamo in 1828. The story concerns a visiting monarch: "He was at the monastery several days and 'partook of the monastery's poverty and liturgy'" (LÖNNROT 1952 (1828): 131).

But as Lönnrot also reports, awe-inspiring riches were part of the sacred center as well. The treasures of Valamo, for example, included delicately crafted candelabras and censers, gold Eucharistic vessels, gilded silver hand crosses and silver candle stands. Church interiors were lavishly decorated with splendid altars, iconostases and doors, and the magnificent gilded sarcophagus of Sergei and Herman in the lower church (see also KOHONEN 1983):

> The afternoon mass had now begun, and I went to the church. My awe was great when I saw all of the beauty which opened up in front of me. The walls were completely covered with pictures, and these had gold- and silver-plated frames. In the same way the columns and ceiling arches were gilded and silvered. Here and there jewels sparkled in gold and silver settings. Wherever the eye roamed, it saw only gold and silver as well as the aforementioned paintings which depicted events from the Old and New Testaments and displayed the likenesses of famous saints (LÖNNROT 1952 (1828): 132–33).

The mystique of monastery wealth can be seen in a number of 'treasure' tales concerning the hidden riches of various monasteries:

> One old man named Hilkku had told the narrator (...) that he had live the major part of his life at Valamo Monastery, and that he had heard from the old monks at the monastery that in former times the treasures of Valamo had been hidden inside a monk's cell, which was walled-up and made unnoticeable from the outside, and there the treasures are still today, nor do the present monks know in which place or in which building this treasure room is located. – Man, 75 years.[62]

> In ancient times at the beginning of Christianity there was a monastery on this hill. This monastery is called 'Keljan monastery', from which has come the name Kelivaara. This monastery was built by two saints, but it is no longer known who they were or when they founded it... During peace times the monastery grew larger and richer and there were great treasures there: icons of God and the holy hermits, church bells of great value, candlesticks and chalices for communion... [At the arrival of the enemy soldiers] the monks hurriedly put all of the riches of the monastery into a large sack and dug a great hole in the earth, burying the riches in the hole...After having covered up the hole the head monk read an incantation, but it is not known what kind, and then 'set' it with a talisman, with which they could retrieve the treasure from the ground in times of peace...[63]

How these two values of asceticism and ostentation were reconciled is not explained in the folklore, and it is unlikely that the pilgrims perceived a need to do so. People came to see and touch the *extremes* of cultural values made tangible: all the wondrous things or

[62] Valamo. 1936. Pekka Pohjanvalo 133. – Jaakko Ahokas, 75 years.

[63] Impilahti. 1935. KRK 143. Juho Kuronen 1. Six additional folk narratives also involve hidden or lost monastery treasure.

ways of life which one could not see in everyday life and which, by their very wondrousness or moral purity, proved that the sacred center was more special, more powerful, more perfect.

What this suggests is that the ideals invested in the sacred center were both concrete and multiple. The sacred center acted as an empty ritual space which could accommodate many ideals: it was, as EADE and SALLNOW have argued, "a realm of competing discourses" (1992: 15).

Other informants expressed yet another set of cultural ideals enshrined at the sacred center, this time concerning moral behavior, which they expressed through the concept of *access* to the sacred center: those who had committed serious sins could not enter the sphere of the pilgrimage goal. Since access was almost always described in terms of crossing water, some folk narratives contained the motif of a floating rock or boat which began to sink if carrying a 'sinful' passenger. By examining these narratives it is possible to determine what constituted the moral ideal (and its lack) as represented in the informational fields:

> Anyone who might have stolen a plow or harrow from another person couldn't go to the monastery. In the middle was a body of water called the White Pond. The boat wouldn't take the person, just went in cricles or stopped, finally it was necessary to return to the shore. Each person openly told the priest what his or her sins were. Then somebody confessed to the priest: 'I have taken another's plow secretly', or any man who had been with a strange woman [not his wife], these were not allowed back on the boat, they had to leave, they didn't reach the monastery. – Woman, 69 years.[64]

> ...Thieves, arsonists and murderers were not carried by the Solovetski boat. The boat would begin to sink. Then whoever had done something wrong was made to swear the truth, people were taken off the boat one by one, and one by one they were put back on. Whoever had done something wrong had to confess it, they had to say it, and then they were not allowed to board the boat. The boat could continue the trip when the sinner had left. There was a woman named Hersoi from Pielisjärvi. When she was a girl she had given birth to a child and had killed it. Then, when she went to Solovetski it was suddenly discovered. The boat wouldn't take her to Solovetski, it began to sink. She had to confess then and there, and she was turned away, and came home. She didn't get to visit Solovetski, she had to go home.
>
> There were a lot of people there. From the villages, you see, people came in big groups. It was a long, long time ago. Only our parents remembered it. – Woman. [65]

The sins mentioned by the narrator clearly reflect biblical teachings: Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, etc. This suggests that the ideals embodied in the sacred centers were first and foremost Christian ones. Conversely, a causal connection was often made between the 'holiness' of the monastery founder who sailed miraculously to the monastery on a flat rock and his ability to reach the sacred site: "[the founder was] a holy man since the rock carried him"; "They were said to be so holy that

[64] Salmi. M. Pelkonen 268. 1935–40.
[65] Salmi. M. Pelkonen 366. 1935–40.

they sailed on a flat rock to the island..."; "[They] were so holy that they were even able to row on a flat rock".[66] But in some narratives even the monastery founders fall short of the ideals, putting them at risk of not reaching the sacred center:

> In former times the old people said that Sroizza, Valmoija and Solohkoi were brothers. They rowed to Solovetski on a stone raft...Sroizza didn't want to live on an island. He said that it's not good to live here, and left...When he left on the stone raft it began to sink so that the water was up to his knees, because he had made a great sin by not wanting to live there. He came back and founded Stroitsa monastery... – Woman, heard from her parents.[67]

These legends focus on 'sin' as the cause of the boat or rock refusing to carry its passengers. Internal motives are not delved into and the focus is on outward obedience. The boat story is strongly reminiscent of belief legends in the Finnish-Karelian culture area. Like the belief legends, the boat story circulated as a tale 'type': what was important was not the precise circumstances or identities of those involved, but the 'image' it created of the sacred center. If we view belief legends, which dealt with all types of 'sinful' acts, as part of the background culture 'surrounding' the sacred centers, we can see how the second 'boat' narrative given above was able to make the sacred center 'distinct': most belief legends concerned with infanticide generally warned against only the spiritual or 'other-worldly' consequences of this crime (see JAUHIAINEN 1989). In the pilgrimage narratives, however, the sin was exposed in *this* world and the guilty turned away before she reached the monastery. This meant that the monastery was on a higher plane of moral gatekeeping than was the surrounding culture: unconfessed murderers (as well as thieves and adulterers) could not be readily distinguished from their neighbors in the course of everyday village life—but *upon approaching the sacred space* of the monastery they were automatically subjected to a re-examination which separated the guilty from the innocent, thus demanding a greater accountability with regard to Christian cultural ideals. A tale from Valamo refers to the same 'weeding out' process and difficulty of entry, again connected to the Christian moral ideal:

> The first priests at Valamo were very godly... People visited [the last archbishop] in order to be blessed, except that not everyone was allowed in to see him. He looked at the visitors and didn't let everyone in. He knew about each visitor, what kind of person he or she was. To the poor he gave money, saying, "Go, may you be blessed by Christ!" – Even the poor he allowed in to see him, if only the heart was clean. – Woman, 69 years.[68]

This idea of moral inspection represented in the folk narratives was instrumental in creating the image of the monastery as a sacred center with higher cultural standards, embodying 'perfection' as opposed to the 'imperfection' of more mundane spaces.

The *Aamun Koitto* descriptions also reveal collective ideals enshrined at Valamo monastery, but these ideals differ markedly from those dealt with in the oral folk narra-

[66] Suistamo. Frans Kärki 2415. 1945.; Kuhmalahti [Häme Province]. KRK Kustaa Lahtinen No. 27. 1935; Impilahti. KRK. Eino Toiviainen 234.

[67] Suistamo. M. Kähmi 16. 1936.

[68] Salmi. M. Pelkonen 269. 1935–40.

tives. There are no stories of hidden treasure, no themes of moral gatekeeping in the written texts. The recurrent ideal expressed in the *Aamun Koitto* texts is the preservation and continuation of *Karelian ethnic, religious and linguistic identity.* This ideal of a unified identity was never mentioned in the folk narratives concerning monasteries and pilgrimage.

Behind the *Aamun Koitto* discourse on *identity* lay the reform work undertaken within the Orthodox Church after Finland became independent from Russia in 1917. A second crucial factor was the Finnish government's interest in 'nationalizing' the Orthodox Karelian people. Such nationalism was geared toward encouraging Karelians, who spoke a dialect of Finnish but who had for centuries been under Russian religious, cultural and linguistic influence, to identify with Finland and Finns (see SETÄLÄ 1966).

Prior to World War I, when Finland was a Grand Duchy of Russia, the struggle between Finnish nationalists and Russians for the 'soul' of the Orthodox Karelian people took place both in Finnish and Russian Karelia and made full propaganda use of concepts concerning religion and nationality. Nationalistic Finns and Karelians (to which several assistant editors of *Aamun Koitto* belonged) held that the only difference between Orthodox Karelians and other (Lutheran) Karelians was mere religion, while the Russians and Russian-minded Karelians stressed that the common bond of Orthodoxy, the true faith, was a more powerful mark of identity than language or 'nationality', and that the Lutheran church of the 'alien West' was the true enemy of Karelia (KIRKKINEN et al. 1995: 276).

After the Russian Revolution and the fall of the Orthodox Church in Russia, Ladoga Karelia (and with it, Valamo monastery) remained on the Finnish side of the now closed border. The interests of the Finnish Orthodox Church reformers in this region lay with the Finnish state, and their solution to the identity dilemma was to foster a Karelian cultural identification among Orthodox parishoners which would be clearly separate from Russianness, in part through group pilgrimages to Valamo (see KILPELÄINEN 1995: 115). This cultural identification stressed not only the Orthodox religion but also the *Finnish language* as an element of 'Karelianness'.

In order to facilitate cultural identification, it was first necessary to promote a clear image of the Karelian people as a separate and unified ethnic group. This was done in part through *Aamun Koitto* descriptions of group pilgrimages to Valamo:

> The Igumen went on to say that Valamo monastery has from the time of its founding been the faithful homefire of *Greater-Karelia*, from which the *Karelian people* have sought spiritual warmth and comfort. It is nonetheless grievous that the *Karelian tribe* is now scattered, and that part of it has ended up outside *its natural motherland*, where all human rights, ideals and religion are trampled upon. The Igumen nonetheless trusted that the day would still dawn, *when even this part of the tribe would reunite with its natural motherland.*[69]

> The Karelian holds firm to the beliefs of his forefathers and its traditional customs.[70]

[69] "The Visit Made to Valamo Monastery by the Officers of the 2nd Division", AK 1933, no. 22: 182, emphasis mine.

[70] "A Certain Trip to Valamo", AK 1938, no. 27: 209. – A. T.

> Already for many years now it has been hoped that for their final festive occasion at the end of their [Sunday school work] the young people could take a trip to Valamo monastery, the Jerusalem of the *Karelian tribe...*[71]

> At the grave of the Karelian apostles Sergei and Herman, the rising Karelian tribe prayed with lit candles.[72]

> The whole day the monastery was full of people. It reminded one greatly of former times. It is said that more than a thousand persons visited the monastery that day, and at their head *the representatives of our Karelian tribe.*[73]

> ...and pastor Ryttyläinen explained the significance of Valamo for the rising generation of the *Karelian tribe...*[74]

In this construction, the Orthodox religion was a key part of Karelian ethnic identification, having been passed down through generations:

> All of the participants were very satisfied and hoped that these sorts of trips could be organized more often so that surely then *our religion, inherited from our fathers*, would be better and more purely preserved within us.[75]

Valamo monastery was emphasized as the unifying element of the Karelian people not only across geographic distance but across historical time as well, constructing an uninterrupted history to match the notion of a united *Karelian people*:

> From these very places the message of the Gospels was brought to the wilds of Karelia in ancient times. From here, light was distributed to our forefathers and foremothers who lived in darkness. And they themselves visited here, drawing life-force and religious strength from this place. They came here as pilgrims, just as we do now. At no time did they leave here without having received comfort.[76]

> ...priest-monk Isaakij...urged those present to lift up their prayers to God in that holy place, *in which their fathers and forefathers had, kneeling, done the same...*[77]

> The Igumen answered my speech by saying that he was happy that the light kindled by the first apostles of Karelia, Sergei and Herman, was still burning brightly, since this youth group had also kindled its light.[78]

[71] "The Youth of the Korpiselkä Congregation at Valamo", AK 1933, no. 35: 280. – A. Ryttyläinen, emphasis mine.

[72] "Concerning the Church's Work Among the Youth", AK 1934 no. 36: 215, emphasis mine.

[73] "The Festivities at Valamo Monastery July 11–12", AK 1920, no. 15: 119–120.

[74] "Concerning the Church's Work Among the Youth", AK 1937, no. 36: 274. – Simo Hiekkaranta. emphasis mine.

[75] "The Salmi Church Choir's Trip to the Monasteries of Konevitsa and Valamo", AK 1939, no. 29: 226. – D. K. emphasis mine.

[76] "Pilgrimage to Valamo", AK 1936, no. 37: 292. – participant, emphasis mine.

[77] "A Certain Trip to Valamo", AK 1938, no. 27: 209. – A. T., emphasis mine.

[78] "The Youth of the Korpiselkä Congregation at Valamo", AK 1933, no. 35: 281. – A. Ryttyläinen, emphasis mine.

> The work and spirit of [Sergei and Herman] live immortal in the Orthodox faith in Karelia, where our forefathers have wandered and which they have left us as a sacred heritage.[79]

In the *Aamun Koitto* descriptions, the Karelian Orthodox people were encouraged to identify with the monastery. Valamo was described as the sacred center of Karelian Orthodox *religion* by such terms as "that cradle-place of our holy faith"[80], "the cradle of Orthodoxy"[81], "cradle of our Orthodox faith"[82] "the cradle of our established faith"[83], "the cradle of Orthodoxy in Karelia"[84], "The Karelian tribe's celebrated cradle of religion"[85], "the most sacred place of Karelian faith"[86], "the holy place of the Orthodox Karelians"[87] and the "Orthodox Karelian spiritual center and mother":[88]

> ...[Valamo monastery] has for centuries been to both Karelians and the Orthodox people not only the headquarters of piety but [the place] from which people return spiritually healthier, renewed, and strengthened in their faith.[89]

> On that occasion all Orthodox Karelians were aware of what a sacred place for them is old Valamo, the cradle of our holy faith within the Karelian tribe.[90]

> [Igumen Hariton:] Our monastery is the cradle and center of Finnish Orthodoxy, so it is our and your common responsibility to preserve it.[91]

> Hopefully Orthodox Karelia will not desert the cradle of our church, but rather look after its preservation.[92]

Constructing Valamo as the sanctuary of Karelian *linguistic* identity, on the other hand, was more problematic. After Valamo became part of Finland in 1918, there was a desire within the Karelian Orthodox parishes, (in conjunction with the Finnish government's interest in nationalizing the Orthodox Karelians) to link Karelian ethnic and religious identity to the Finnish language rather than the Russian (or Church Slavonic) languages, and to make Valamo the center of that linguistic identity. This desire encountered two problems: the first was that in the minds of the Karelian Orthodox people, Finnish language priests and services had long been associated with Lutheranism (see HEIKKINEN 1989: 148). Prior to 1917, the Russian government in Orthodox Karelia had tried to draw a parallel between the Orthodox religion and Russian nationality as part of its equaliza-

79 "To Valamo's Pilgrims", AK 1933, no. 26: 209. – M. Michailov.
80 "A Visit to Valamo", AK 1903, no. 7: 60.
81 "Reminiscences from Sunday School Courses", AK 1934, no. 30: 177, – Participant.
82 "Reminiscences from Sunday School Courses", AK 1936, no. 37: 290. – Olga Majuri.
83 "Reminiscences from Sunday School Courses", AK 1936, no. 37: 291. – Olga Majuri.
84 "A Certain Trip to Valamo", AK 1938. no. 27: 209. – A. T.
85 "Notable Youth Expeditions from Karelian Congregations to Valamo", AK 1939, no. 31: 243.
86 "A Pilgrimage to Valamo", AK 1936, no. 37: 291. – Participant.
87 "At the Harbour of Peace", AK 1937, no. 34: 257. – M. Michailov
88 "On Ss. Sergei and Herman's Day", AK 1932, no. 37: 293. – Aari Surakka.
89 "At the Harbour of Peace", AK 1937, no. 34: 257. – M. Michailov.
90 "The Festivities at Valamo Monastery July 11–12", AK 1920, no. 15: 119–120.
91 "At the Harbour of Peace", AK 1937, no. 34: 257. – M. Michailov.
92 "A Certain Trip to Valamo", AK 1938, no. 27: 209. – A. T.

tion and consolidation campaign in Finland, and this viewpoint was part of the education received in Russian schools in border districts (SETÄLÄ 1966:11). As a result, there seems to have been a strong resistance to any change from Church Slavonic to Finnish language services in general, as one parish priest described in 1907:

> The people blindly believe that if church services were to begin to be held in Finnish, then they would lose their own faith and would become Finns, that is, Lutherans. In the eyes of these simple people, religion and ethnicity are apparently tangled up together.[93]

The second problem was that Valamo itself was primarily Russian-speaking: only a few monks spoke Finnish, and most services were conducted in Church Slavonic up until World War II (see KILPELÄINEN 1994: 175–177, 181–182).

The *Aamun Koitto* discourse on the subject suggests an attempt to influence both of these issues by 1) making it clear that Finnish was the language with which Orthodox Karelians should identify, 2) praising the use of Finnish at Valamo and 3) urging its more frequent use:

> ...[w]e returned to the lower church, where we conducted a moment of prayer in the Finnish language for the monastery founders, so that they would pray on our behalf. *It warmed the heart to hear the prayer moment conducted there in that beloved language, where moments before Church Slavonic had resounded.*[94]

> [Igumen Hariton]: All of you...today get to hear the church service and choir singing in your own *beloved language.*[95]

> ...Nor does the significance of Valamo monastery diminish in the light of the fact that its present population is Russian by birth. Every monk who was at all able, participated enthusiastically in the Finnish language service.[96]

> The church of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, which is located at the head of the so-called holy gate of Valamo monastery, has been used earlier on special occasions to conduct services in Finnish. Last summer and the summer before, liturgical services [in Finnish] were conducted there regularly, on Sunday as well as on important holidays, beginning at 7:00 in the morning. This initiative has fallen upon good soil in this holy place, since recent years have seen an increase in the number of pilgrims from the Karelian Orthodox population as well as from elsewhere in Finland who do not understand the Slavic language services in the monastery's main church and thus cannot completely satisfy their sacred devotion there.
>
> ...May the Lord bless this holy initiative in Valamo's vineyard and may it attract his honor and those involved in the salvation of human souls, so that this initiative would succeed and grow from a tiny mustard seed into a great tree of the Kingdom of Heaven, under which and on whose branches weary souls could receive rest, warmth, light, comfort and refreshment on their life's journey.[97]

[93] "Letters from Karelia: In the midst of the folk of Orthodox Border Karelia", AK 1907, no. 2: 18.
[94] "A Trip to Valamo Monastery", AK 1923, no. 21: 164, emphasis mine.
[95] "At the Harbour of Peace", AK 1937, no. 34: 257. – M. Michailov, emphasis mine.
[96] "The Festivities at Valamo Monastery July 11–12", AK 1920, no. 15: 119–120.
[97] "The Church of Peter and Paul at Valamo", AK 1927, no. 24: 304. – P. I.

> Finnish church services are a rarity at Valamo, and the monks know less Finnish than Valamo's priests, nor do they have any sympathy for such an interest... The heartfelt wish of many a monastery visitor would come true if Valamo monastery would realize this on their own and organize Finnish language church services.[98]

THE PILGRIMAGE EXPERIENCE AS A RESULT OF ENCULTURATION IN A SPECIFIC COMMUNITY

Based on the observations above, I suggest that from the folk point of view, pilgrimage in traditional Orthodox Karelia was not a "shift from worldliness towards spirituality", in GOTHÓNI's terms (1993: 113). In most cases pilgrims were neither departing from a state of 'worldliness' (in the sense of a Western rational or secular worldview) nor were they entering a state or awareness of spirituality as an inner, emotional or mystical process. Rather, the Orthodox Karelian folk pilgrim started from, and remained within a worldview which included continual contact with the sacred, a category which included religious figures, the dead, dynamistic forces, forest and water spirits and other supernatural beings (see STARK et al. 1996; STARK-AROLA 1998). On the basis of folk beliefs recorded at the turn of the century, VIRTANEN (1968: 47) tells us that Christianity had only a superficial influence on the mythico-magical worldview of Archangel Karelians, and magic incantations and descriptions collected well into the 1960s and deposited in the Finnish Literature Society Folklore Archives show that throughout Orthodox Karelia, beliefs and practices associated with sorcery, the evil eye and animism existed until at least the 1940s in many places. This was a serious problem in the eyes of the church officialdom. In 1907 a priest from Salmi wrote in *Aamun Koitto*:

> In this parish, members of the Orthodox church live in the lowest kind of ignorance and magic-belief...In a word, the people outwardly perform all that the church requires, but without knowing their real significance, not knowing, for example, such a thing as the meaning of making the sign of the cross, not to mention other outward customs.
>
> ...One encounters crudity and superstition wherever one looks.[99]

What the priest refers to as 'superstition' was really the extension of the syncretic worldview to frame the new information and phenomena encountered at Orthodox monasteries. The monks and priests appearing in legends about monasteries used 'magic' to conceal their treasure[100] and had the power to foresee the future.[101] The animistic/dynamistic concept of *haldiekas* (= 1. containing a *haltia* or place spirit, or 2. powerful, unable to be harmed by magic) was also utilized as a familiar model for conceptualizing miracles or other inexplicable occurrences at Valamo monastery:

[98] "The Valamo Trip made by the Pupils of Soanlahti Primary School 18–19.6. 1925", AK 1925, no. 14: 129.

[99] "Letters from Karelia", AK 1907, no. 2: 17.

[100] Impilahti. KT 129. Juho Kuronen 45. 1936.

[101] Salmi. M. Pelkonen 269. 1935–40.

> At Valamo, in the church of Nikolai, there was a *haldiekas* chapel. There in the chapel was an ancient coffin which was able to speak. When you hit the coffin with a birch branch, it said: 'Nikolai, Nikolai, Nikolai'. A lot of people have heard that coffin speak. – Man, 78 years.[102]

> [Sergei and Herman] did not have a boat with which to row across the sea to Valamo, where they went to found the monastery. They sat on a rock on the shore and the rock carried them across the sea to Valamo. There those great holy hermits founded the monastery...Both holy men died at Valamo. There they have their own chapel. "The chapel is *haldiekas*". Miraculous cures happen there as well. – Man, 78 years.[103]

> At Valamo there is the grave of Ss. Sergei and Herman. 'It is a *haldiekas* chapel'. They have the best *haltija* because they are real holy hermits. They can be compared to Christ. People's sicknesses are cured in the chapel when they pray there in true faith. – Man, 64 years.[104]

The fact that the oral and written narratives differ in their perceptions of pilgrimage and the sacred center calls into question the "naturalness" of *both* reactions. Just as the perceptions of the folk laity were shaped within their communities by a centuries-old dialectic process between folk and institutional religion, so too I argue that the *Aamun Koitto* pilgrimage discourse concerning spirituality and sin was a *constructed* discourse fostered by the Church officialdom and 'taught' to parish members. In other words, official Church teachings brought about a learned response, a certain type of encounter with the sacred, and limited this encounter to a particular range of perceptions and experiences. I suggest that if the pilgrims who are described in *Aamun Koitto* had mystic or spiritual experiences or dwelt on their sinfulness, it is in large part because church workers were actively trying to create this response within them, and perhaps were even teaching pilgrims that this was what they should expect and hope for from the visit to Valamo.

We know, for example, that in the 1920s and 1930s the Church was involved in a campaign to socialize Karelian youth through group pilgrimages in order to bring pilgrimage behavior and experience in line with institutional teachings and interests, to 'tighten the ranks" of Karelian Orthodoxy. An 'official' view of what pilgrimage should be was increasingly stressed by church workers. Hannu KILPELÄINEN (1995) has characterized the motives of parish priests who organized group pilgrimages for children and students in the 1930s as 'the possibility or wish to influence the process of *socialization* and *enculturation*" (p. 115, emphasis in original). Letters written by these priests to Valamo monastery reveal that they conceived of these visits to the monastery as ways of strengthening the bond between individual pilgrims and the Orthodox religion.

This socialization was seen to be necessary due to the threats facing Karelian Orthodoxy from secularization, the growing activities of protestant sects, the decline in Orthodox consciousness, and the moral corruption seen to be part of the spirit of the times, which some priests viewed as the result of atheist movements linked to Marxism

[102] Suistamo. Siiri Oulasmaa a) 6211. 1961.
[103] Suistamo. Siiri Oulasmaa a) 6216. 1961.
[104] Suistamo. Siiri Oulasmaa a) 6214. 1961.

(KILPELÄINEN 1994: 179). The threat from the protestant sects appears to have been most widespread at the beginning of the 1930s, in the period of deepest economic depression in Karelia (KILPELÄINEN 1994: 177). Concerns over these threats can also be seen from the *Aamun Koitto* descriptions:

> May the remembrance of Saints Sergei and Herman ignite in us an even greater love for the Orthodox faith, and an even greater loyalty to that faith, which was preached in ancient times by the holy educators of Karelia, Sergei and Herman. And this summons calls out to us particularly forcefully and bindingly now, as sectarians travel throughout Karelia in droves, preaching beside the Bible to us of things thought up by men, and of teachings artificially squeezed out of the Bible.[105]

Such evidence for the conscious socialization of Karelian pilgrims supports the suggestion that the concepts of salvation, sin, inner spirituality and emotionality found in the *Aamun Koitto* descriptions were to some extent pre-programmed responses to such enculturation. This enculturation, in turn, arose from a growing Karelian ethnic awareness and the socio-political relationship between the Orthodox Church, Finland and Russia during the period between the wars. The concept of Valamo *as a place* to be cherished (and defended), a stronghold of Karelian identity located on the Finnish-Russian border; images of past encounters with high authorities in which such authorities held Valamo in high respect; and images of its current inhabitants as familiar, avowed 'friends' of Finland were vital for the political and educational agendas of the reformers and intellectuals of the Karelian Orthodox church (SETÄLÄ 1966; KILPELÄINEN 1994, 1995). These images then became part of the informational field which shaped the perceptions and experiences of *Aamun Koitto* readers and future pilgrims.

In conclusion, I argue that the different informational fields surrounding Karelian monasteries point to the *culturally-constructed nature* of pilgrim experience and perception at the sacred center. Because of this, we need to focus on the specific socio-cultural conditions which give rise to informational fields, which in turn play a part in shaping pilgrim experience. The search for a universal definition of pilgrimage or universal elements within *pilgrimage* thus may not be a useful point of departure for understanding pilgrimage and the nature of the sacred center. The assumption that the journeys we call pilgrimage in different cultures and at different points in history are in essence all the same thing takes for granted that which should be examined, and reduces the ability of the researcher to uncover why the pilgrimage experience is different in different contexts.

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[105] "To Valamo's Pilgrims", AK 1933, no. 26: 209. – M. Michailov.

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THE ORIGIN OF NEW RELIGIONS IN HUNGARIAN CHURCH HISTORY

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"New Religion" in the strict sense of the term is a new form of religion, as opposed to an "Old Religion". It is a complex new system of beliefs (and their theory, usually called theology) and activities (commonly called rites), as well as a new way of social organisation both of individuals and groups. Christianity as opposed to Judaism and Reformation instead of Mediaeval Christianity in Europe are sparkling examples. But during the entire history of mankind not only totally new religions arise – sometimes only (important) features change. The Second Vatican Council, the Awakening(s) in Northern Europe and the constant fight between Shiites and Sunnites exemplify this. When a "heathen" people is baptized, when atheism emerges (Karl Marx quits the faith of his Rabbinic father, young Stalin leaves the Orthodox priests' seminar, etc.), one can ask the question: Is the previous or the latter form truly a "religion"? And, it is a well known fact that non-religious social and political movements often play a part on the spiritual (hence: religious) stage (like the great French Revolution, already from 1790 on), too. It is not always easy to differentiate between a religious sect (i.e. a new group within an already existing religion) or a truly new religion. We can verify the existence of a religion only from a distance and after a considerable amount of elapsed time (which might be at least several generations). Thus the question of determining or declaring a "new" "religion" is not an easy task.[1]

Still it is very important to look at Hungarian church history from this point of view. It is a well-known fact that, alas, there is no concise scholarly history of religion(s) in Hungary. My sketch will only be a glimpse into that striking issue. There is no need to discuss why this topic is so important not only for the proper ecclesiastical history in Hungary, but also for the general history of Hungary and her culture, including folklore aspects, too.

Fully aware of the theoretical importance of such a study, I will try to be humble and only discuss some of the basic data relevant to the topic empirically.

If one starts with a terminological problem, one should mention that in Northern Europe, the name is *New Religion* (e.g. by the influential Åbo symposium in September

[1] Because of accepted limits of my paper I shall not give an exhaustive documentation or a concise bibliography of the questions mentioned. I shall refer only to some of the latest and summarizing publications, which contain further references.

1974)[2], while in the other parts of the world "new religious *movement*" is the more circumspect term. H. W. Turner in his summarizing bibliographies[3] uses that term. It is not so easy to determine when the term was first used. For us it seems to be that e.g. Tibor Bodrogi, Andreas Lommel, Guglielmo Guariglia, Jacob Needleman, Günter Lanczkowski and Carsten Colpe have used somewhat different, somewhat similar nominations for the same phenomena. In this regard the breakthrough of the simple term (new "religions") can be ascribed to Needleman. His first summary[4] – as well as the later books, published by him and by his colleagues – gave impetus to further research. As an unquestionable authority, Lanczkowski, in his widely read paperback[5] has canonized the view according to which "new" religions are phenomena only of our age. If we accept this approach, in Hungary we can find "new religions" only after the second world war. This is a good chance for actual folklore research in Hungary, since about twenty years ago religious movements *bokor* and *Nagymaros*, *Hare Krishna* (and perhaps early Satanites) appeared on the Hungarian scene[6]. The reason I tend not to accept this overly narrow approach to "new" religions is that it does not represent the entire time span (history) of religions in Hungary.

Another well-known understanding of the term "new religions" (as exemplified by Hans Waldenfels[7]) is, that they are by grace (and not in fact) innovative forces in Asian religions. To name only a few: Ananda Marga, Brahma Kunaris, new forms of Buddhism or Chinese religious practices, Divine Light Mission, Divine Light Zentrum, and all kinds of modern, personal Gurus. Also there are those trends in modern Hinduism, Mahikati, Meher Baba, Moon-Religion, Rajneshism, Rissho Kosei-kai, Sahaja Yoga, Sai Baba, Seicho-no Ie, Soka Gakkai, Sri Chinmoy, Tensho Kotai Jingukyo (to some extent developed from shamanistic background), etc. belong to that. The selection is still not complete – it focuses on India and Japan, and mentions succintly some other countries, like Vietnam and Korea; on the other hand, it neglects very important and well established similar movements both inside and outside Asia[8]. In contemporary North America and Europe, some of those new religions have taken root, while others seem to be absent. In Hungary, their popularity mirrors the "Western" pattern – an important fact, we have to mention, because, e.g. in Russia, Ukraine and other Soviet-style cultures the picture is different. They have absorbed several new religions both from the East and the West. In today's Hungary, most of these new religions are a very recent phenomenon. It is rather a curiosity that Baha'ullah a century ago once travelled through Budapest, too. But his visit then was without any important impact on Hungarians.

[2] BIEZAIS ed. 1975.

[3] TURNER 1977–1992.

[4] NEEDLEMAN 1972. For his more wide, later views (e.g. for the term of "used religion") see: NEEDLEMAN 1994.

[5] LANCZKOWSKI 1974.

[6] See e.g.: SZAKOLCZAY 1989; KAMARÁS 1989; BALDUCCI 1992: 7–8; KAMARÁS 1998, etc. On the impact of New Age, see: GASSMANN 1987. On Hungarian impacts: GÁL 1997.

[7] See e.g.: WALDENFELS 1995.

[8] See e.g. the various entries in GASPER–MÜLLER–VALENTIN 1995.

According to common understanding in Hungary, the new religions among us are recent and direct imports. Hare Krishna, Scientology, New Age and similar groups are the most popular. Hungarian Baha'i belongs to that group, too. Serious study of those new religions among us would be an important task of the sociology of religions in Hungary. The legal and social situation of those contemporary "new religions" in the country has changed over the last decades. Only after the second World War did the legal status of the churches and religions (in general) undergo a modernization in Hungary. Before that time there was only one state church ("state religion"): the Roman Catholic Church and a few "historical churches" (such as the Calvinists, Lutherans and Unitarians) existed. These had privileges. The Jewish religion held an "emancipated" place, but the legal situation for the other churches and religious groups remained without favorable regulation.

At the end of 1940's, when there was not yet a one-party system, but a coalition government in Hungary, agreements were signed with many of the churches in Hungary, separating the church from the state. The new situation gave relatively more rights to some small (and to the so-called "free") churches, but not to all and not too many. And deprivatisation of the property in fact paralyzed the regular activities of the churches. Soon a communist style secularization and atheism became dominant. After many radical changes in governing the society the actual regulation of the religious life in Hungary dates back to recent years. In theory the state and the churches are completely separated, but education, communication network and social and medical care organized by the churches are being supported (to some degree) by the state. The cultural activity of the churches in Hungary is a vivid one, and some churches even are engaged in activities close to politics. There is no official difference regarding the legal status of the registered (!) churches in Hungary, their number is at the moment about 75[9]; including not only the world-wide accepted major denominations, such as the Jewish, Christian and Islam religions, but also several new formations (among them those based on Hinduism, Buddhism, Lamaism, etc). We could name here only the best known groups, in order to show, how many different movements got already acceptance in Hungary: Hungarian Ecumenic Vaisnava Church, Gate of Wisdom Buddhist Church, Buddhist Mission – Hungarian Arya Maitreya Mandala, Karma Dechen Özel Ling, Hungarian Chan Buddhist Community, Hungarian Karma-Kagyüpa Community, Hungarian Community of KRISNA-Conscious Believers, OM Vishwa Guru Deep Hindu Mandir, RIME Tenzin Sedrup Ling Rime Buddhist Centre, Szangye Menlai Gedün – Buddha, the Healer's Community, etc... Some of those "new religions" appeared in Hungary considerably earlier than in our days, as e.g. the Nazarenites, Adventists, Baptists, Pentecostals, Free Christians, Brethren and Jehova's Witnesses. Other "registered" churches or religious movements in Hungary are more a curiosity according to the common opinion of the Hungarians. The general knowledge on churches like AGAPÉ Community, Hungarian Church of the Speaking Bible, Salvation Army, International Church, Unifying Church,

[9] See the official annual lists of churches in Hungary: PLATTHY 1996. Hungarian associations give lists on churches and ecclesiatic institutions among the Hungarians in Serbia, Romania, Ukraine, etc.

Living Word Fully Evangelical Christian Church, Living God's Church, Community of Faith, Federal Mission of God's Community, God's Church, Christian Brethren Community, Followers of Christ, Christ's Love Community, Hungarian Religion Community, Hungarian Golden Rosicrucians Religious Community, Hungarian Late Rain Community, Hungarian Panthocatholic Traditional Church, Hungarian Scientology Church, Hungarian New Apostolic Church, Revival Prayer Group Mission's Church, Raise your Hand for Christ Love Community, Ancient Christian Apostolic Church, Shalom Open Biblical Communities, Fully Evangelical Christian Community (MAHANAIM), Swedish Trollhattan Pentecostal Missions Source Community, etc. We did not include here the smaller or not registered groups, and the above given names are perhaps not always identical with the official English denominations. But it it obvious that the number of such movements in Hungary is already considerably high, their tendencies are of very wide range. And, it is clearly impossible to describe the church history in Hungary without mentioning their activity during the last more than one-and-half centuries. But this topic is not relevant to my present paper, and I plan to come back to it at another occasion[10].

Furthermore we must make a clear distinction between history of religion(s) and history of church(es) in Hungary as well. Religion is in this respect a sum of ideas and rites, while church is in the same respect an institution of the given society. However, because of practical reasons, in the following pages I shall use the terms synonymously. Moreover I shall not make a distinction between folk and "high" religions, because I want to give a general view of my actual topic. But it is quite obvious that the picture I am going to present is only a first attempt to show the problem which must be elaborated upon. For the same reason I will not give an exhaustive bibliography here. Unfortunately, there is no concise bibliography on the history of religions in Hungary.

"New religion" – according to the above mentioned distinctions – might have appeared for the first time among Hungarians, when they were first baptized. According to common view, it happened exactly at the moment when Prince Vajk was baptized (between 990 and years before 997 A.D.) or, when he was crowned (1000 A.D.) and became King St. Stephen, the founding ruler of Christian Hungary. But in fact the conversion of Hungary was a longer and complicated process. Prince Bulcsu (948 A.D. in Byzantium), Prince Géza (father of King Stephen) and 5000 (!) notables (972 A.D. by German missionaries), finally – after a treaty with the German leaders (973 A.D., Quedlinburg) –the whole political elite in Hungary became Christian; thus by 978 A.D. both in ecclesiastic and political terms Hungary already belonged to Christian Europe. Several and close ties with Prague, Nitra, Salzburg, Passau, Bavaria, Venice, Rome and Byzantium showed the multiple character of such contacts. Greek and Latin documents refer to the new religion among the Hungarians of this time[11]. In common view on early Hungarian history it is not yet according to its importance accepted fact – nevertheless it is a very decisive moment that important Hungarian terms of religion and culture (e.g. *kereszt*

[10] The actual summary on major churches in Hungary: GESZTELYI 1991.

[11] See the summary as given in GYÖRFFY 1983, especially 67–81.

'cross', *keresztény* 'Christian', *apát* 'abbot', *vecsernye* 'evening service', etc.) can be traced back to that very time of the conversion of the Hungarians. But just from the limited character of such "new" terms, we could think that Christian doctrine and terminology must not have been unknown to the Hungarians before that time. If we list only shortly such important basic terms of the Christian religion (and church) in Hungary as *Isten* 'God', *ördög* 'devil/Devil', *ég/menny* both mean 'heaven', *imád* 'adores, prays', *hit* 'faith', *bűn* 'sin', *bocsá(j)t* 'forgives, leaves off (the sin), gives penitence', or even *írás* 'writing, script', *betű* 'letter (of the alphabet)', *ró/rovás* 'carves/runic script', *könyv* 'book', etc.[12], we cannot exclude the possibility that before the aforementioned "official" conversion of Hungary, a relatively high system of beliefs had already been known, which we can term – according to the distinction given before – at least to some extent as religion. If this was the case, the conversion of the country at the second half of the 10th century after that earlier "religion" was in principle already the first "new" religion for the Hungarians.

In medieval Hungary historical sources refer to the heathen uprisings ("revolts"), and in some cases to heretics, too. Any pagan "revival", of course, is by its nature not a "new religion", just to the contrary, an anti-religious move. But can we find forms of heresy, in the strict sense of the word, in early medieval Hungary at all? Before we decide the case, we could mention that there are only two such candidates for this kind of interpretation.

Bishop to south-central part of King Stephen's Hungary – one of the first recognized Catholic intellectuals in the newly converted land – Gerardo Morosini (after 997–1046) from Venice (in Hungarian documents: St. Gerhardus/Gellért), in his homiletic book *Deliberatio supra hymnum trium puerorum* (written about 1042, a lengthy and extremely complicated commentary on prophet Daniel's book from the Old Testament), among different theoretical contemplations, fighting desperately against various dangerous contemporary heretics, he refers to prior to then unknown abusers of the Christian doctrine. According to some recent Hungarian scholars, the actual "heretics" in question have been the Bogumils (in Hungary). But after a thorough scrutiny, Gerardo's "actual" statements are mere quotations from Isidore, Archbishop of Seville's *Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX,* thus not referring to the contemporary situation of the religion in Hungary at all. Instead of the romantic picture of Bishop Gerardo (so vividly presented by some Hungarian "philologists"), traveling in the uncivilized Hungary with dozens, or even hundreds of theoretical books, in which he was looking for the final theological refutation of the arguments by the many living Bogumils in Hungary, we might easily accept the fact that the imaginary heretics in Gerardo's book shadow only Isidore's, the Hispanian erudite's vast knowledge (from about 633 A.D., i.e. thousands of miles and hundreds of years away from King Stephen's Hungary). Bogumils appeared within the confines of the medieval Hungarian kingdom considerably later. According to the primary sources (as in J.D. Mansi *Sacrorum consiliorum nova et amplissima collectio,* Florence, 1759 on) Bogumils were traceable "in Bulgaria, Dalmatia, Croatia, in the vicinity of Hungary" from about 1201–1202, 1203–1206 – also not during Bishop Gerardo's lifetime. Even if the Bogumils played later (in the 13th century) an important role in Bosnia, i.e. southwards

[12] For the etymologies see the latest summary, with references to earlier dictionaries: BENKŐ 1992–1997.

of the Hungarian Kingdom, it is not an evidence for the activity of Bogumil heretics in Hungary by about 1042! Thus the activity of the dualistic heretics of the Bogumil church cannot be termed as an early indication of a "new" religion in early Medieval Hungary[13].

The book-length manuscripts, known as the *(Hungarian) Hussite Bible,* are more reliable documents of the religious dissenters' life in Medieval Hungary[14].

Tamás Pécsi and Bálint Újlaki, two Hungarian priests, were studying (most probably between 1399 and 1411) divinity at the University in Prague, and became followers of Dr. Ján Hus' doctrine. We do not know for sure, when and how they returned to South Hungary (today's Slavonia, between the rivers Danube and Sava), where then they selected and translated various texts from the Bible: mostly the prophetic parts from the Old Testament, disciplinary books from the Gospels and actualizable songs from the Psalms. Their translation might have been done between 1416 and 1441. Because of the inquisitors' intimidating search, together with their communities, they fled to Moldavia (east from the Carpathians, now in Romania). We have got long parts of the translation (in later copies from three codices: *Bécsi-kódex* about 1450, *Müncheni-kódex* about 1466, *Apor-kódex* by the end of the 15th century, and further in only some other, indirect documents), which make quite possible to understand the then modernized religious view of the Hungarian Hussite communities. On the other hand, besides these translations (in an elaborate Hungarian language, and with no reference for Hussites in Hungary of other but Hungarian tongue) we do not know much about the activity of the Hussite movement among the Hungarians. The fact that important parts of the Holy Scripture have been translated into Hungarian (and not into any other local language of the plurilingual Hungarian kingdom) speaks for the Hungarian primary interest in the background of the Hussite movement in Hungary. Still we cannot declare for sure that a "new" (Hussite) religiosity then developed in the country. Even if we admit that the written sources stem from the enemies of Hussitism, who fear and downplay the new movement, we could not think from the contemporary references in Hungary that Hussitism did play during the 15th century any significant role for the majority of Hungarians (in contrast to Bohemia). Thus we cannot find then a "new religion" in Hungary, originated by Hussitism.

The mainstream reformation appeared during the first third of the 16th century in Hungary rather quickly[15]. In the 1510s the whole country was in deep social and political crisis. The greatest "peasant war" (a bloody uprising in 1514, led by György Dózsa) was brutally defeated, and eternal serfdom for the peasants was again proclaimed. During the entire 16th century the German minority, the towns and the royal family in Hungary had close and direct contacts with the German world. Marquis George of Brandenburg and Ansbach, a close relative and tutor to the young King of Hungary, Louis the Second, was the first supporter of the reformatory ideas of Dr. Martin Luther in Hungary, as early as

[13] See the short summary of my views: VOIGT 1990.

[14] On the topic see my forthcoming short paper: VOIGT 1998.

[15] Primary data are already mentioned in the classical histories of the Reformation in Hungary. See e.g.: ZOVÁNYI 1922.

1518! The then newly elected Roman Catholic Archbishop of Esztergom (also the Primate of Hungary), György Szathmári, proclaimed immediately (as early as 1521) the Papal bulls condemning the Lutheran doctrines, and thus a severe fight between the "old" (Catholic) and the "new" (Protestant) churches in Hungary started.

According to the general opinion (both in Europe and in Hungary proper) the history of the reformation (and similarly of the counter-reformation) in Hungary is a simple story. Until the end of the 16th century the country quickly became mostly Protestant. Then, in the next century, the counter-reformation turned back equally rapidly the country to (the already post-Tridentine and Baroque) Catholicism. But the actual historical picture is more complicated. For the task of the present study the main question is the following: how far did the Reformation go in Hungary?

Church historians agree[16] that until about 1556 the Reformation in Hungary followed mainly the German (Lutheran) trend. Then the Swiss (Calvinist) trend became powerful, and consequently the Reformation divided in Hungary about 1560. Nevertheless, in spite of the serious split, and later on in spite of the massive Counter-Reformation, both Protestant churches, the Lutherans as well as the Calvinists, survived in Hungary, just into our days. In Transylvania (at the time a vasalle to the Turks, but in principle an independent state), the trend of the Reformation went remarkably further. From 1564/65 on, Reverend Ferenc Dávid preached there in an unquestionable Antitrinitarian tone, founding the first Unitarian church in Transylvania. The notorious reformer in Switzerland, Michel Servet became popular in the country by the end of 1560s. Even more an interesting further step was the *judaizare*-tendency, i.e. a rigid return to the Old Testament and to the Jewish religious ceremonies, including even the celebration of the Sabbath (instead of the Sunday). A more proper label for this religious movement would be thus *Sabbatarians*. This movement can be traced back to the end of 1580s, and it has reached its peak as late as after 1624, under the leadership of the (then already disgraced) Chancellor of Transylvania, Simon Pécsi. In some Transylvanian villages the descendents of those "Jewish" Sabbatarians lived until the World War II, when they were deported and killed by the Nazis – as Jews![17]

Hungarian church historians have recently stressed that such radical tendencies (Antitrinitarianism, "Jewish" ritual-following communities, etc.) came from Western Europe (but, more precisely, through East European routes) to Transylvania: still, the logic of the continuous religious innovations reflects the actual Transylvanian (and Hungarian) circumstances. Especially in the case of the later, most radical innovations, we can firmly speak of "new religions" within the frames of Hungarian church history. Moreover, it would be very interesting to make a detailed description of such churches, from he point of view of their "new religion" characteristics, because this aspect has not yet been applied to them by the otherwise very reliable Hungarian church and culture historians.

Recently another interesting kind of historical documents was published, throwing

[16] See e.g. SÓLYOM 1933 (1996), and BARTON–MAKKAI 1987, and ZOVÁNYI 1977.
[17] See e.g.: DÁN 1987 (with references to earlier publications by himself or by others).

light on a hitherto neglected chapter of Hungarian church history[18]. The papers for the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* (Rome) contain first-hand reports on recatholicizing of the parts of Hungary where the (Catholic) church organization collapsed after the devastating Turkish invasion (from 1526 on). At that time, and finally for about 150 years, southern and central counties of Hungary became subdued provinces to the Ottoman Empire. Christian religion was there in imminent danger. Catholic Bishop Miklós Telegdi wrote to the Pope in Rome, as early as 1580, that during the next century "there would be no traces of Catholicism in the land (of Hungary)". As an actual answer to the challenge the institution of *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* was founded in 1622 by Pope Gregory XV. Its aim was to send missionaries to the territories occupied by the Moslims (or by Protestants as well). Hungary was one of the closest and most important areas among them. They tried to direct to Hungary (and Transylvania) well-trained missionaries from Italy, Austria, Poland, Dalmatia, Bosnia, etc., who had to submit reports on the actual religious situation in the lands they have visited. Finally, during the recent years, the first modern publications of those relations appeared. Even if we eliminate the overtones and exaggerated self-praise of the writers of those reports, the picture on the actual Christian religious activity in those parts of Hungary is devastating. According to the reports, in the occupied territories of Hungary only "heathen" and "heretic" people live. If there are some Catholics left, they are scattered, and they have lost their church institutions completely. They have not seen priests and have not made confessions for generations. They do not remember the most venerated Christian hymns and prayers (including even the *Lord's Prayer*). Baptism or funeral ceremonies have been absent for a very long time. Bishop's visitations occurred there a hundred years ago! In the documents there is no end to such laments. In one word it means that (if their mission were successful) the regained Roman Catholic religion in those territories can be labelled as a "new religion". (The reports are from the 17th century. But if we remember the history of the Balkan countries during the next centuries, too, we might say, this was not there the latest case for revitalization of the Christian church – in form of a "new" religion.)

Hitherto only the first volumes of Hungarian documents (from 1627 to 1707) appeared, and their evaluation has just been started. The time span of the reports is the more interesting, because it connects the age of the Reformation and of the Turkish invasion in Hungary with the age of the reestablishment of the Habsburg (and Catholic) domination all over the country.

The geography of religions in Hungary became stable also by the end of 18th century. United churches: (Greek Catholic and Romanian Catholic, etc.) are the latest formations then, but we cannot name them properly as "new" religions.

In the 19th century the first modern "new" religions appeared in Hungary (by 1839 the *Believers in Christ – Nazarenite Community*, by 1846 the Baptists, etc.)[19] To describe their activity as that of "new religions" would be the task of another study.

[18] SÁVAI–PINTÉR 1993–1997; TÓTH 1994 (with critical remarks on the other publication).

[19] See the summary, as given in SZIGETI 1981: 16. His collected papers (containing unparalleled source material of the free churches in Hungary) have been multiplied in some copies, but are still inaccessible to a greater public: SZIGETI 1996.

Instead, I would like to mention only one more fact and to refer to one other important feature.

One could ask why there was no successful attempt to establish a truly puritan Protestant church in Hungary?[20] There are data that some Calvinist ministers (e.g. Imre Szilvásújfalvi Anderkó before 1610, János Tolnai Dáli between 1638 and 1646, etc.) expressed this ideology. But either they failed to persuade the religious communities to follow them, or the "high church" in Hungary could integrate the new doctrines into their system of the existing reformed theology. All this happened by the second half of the 17th century.

Protestant church historians in Hungary used to emphasize the fact that the independence of small protestant communities (usually named as *ecclesiola*) and the "lay presbyterium" are the fruits of that half-succesful move toward a Hungarian puritanism. Again, this road leads us to the peasant and folk religious movements in Hungary – just into our days.[21]

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[20] There is no detailed treatment of the topic. The last Hungarian summary is: MAKKAI 1952.
[21] For continuation of my paper see among others the paper by SZIGETI (1998).

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THE ORIGINS OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN FINLAND

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The Theosophical Society in Finland was founded in 1907. But already in 1892 there were Finns who joined the Theosophical Society in Sweden. Because of the political situation it was not possible to establish a theosophical society before 1907. About one hundred years before the founding of the Theosophical Society in Finland the country had become a grand duchy of Russia, after the war between Sweden and Russia in 1808–1809, and the Russian authorities did not accept the proposition of a theosophical society in either the grand duchy or in the motherland.

RESEARCH GOALS

The following study attempts to delineate the origins of the Theosophical Society in Finland in broad lines. The research begins with a clarification of how theosophy was presented in the Finnish press at the beginning of the 1890s. Notices in the Finnish press were few, but from the newspaper articles that did appear the Finnish reader could still get a certain concept of what the teachings of the theosophical movement were. After that the origins of theosophical activity in Finland are described from the humble beginnings in the 1890s to the founding of the Finnish society in 1907.

SOURCES AND EARLIER RESEARCH

An inquiry addressed to the Theosophical Society in Finland resulted in the find that the society does not dispose of an archive dealing with its own earliest history. The most important sources are consequently limited to newspapers and journals, the publications of the Swedish and Finnish theosophical societies, that is, Teosofisk Tidskrift (Theosophical Journal), Omatunto (Conscience) and Tietäjä (The Wise), the Finnish society's published minutes as well as non-contemporary sources, especially such as originate from theosophists, all of which means that the better part of the sources must be under suspicion of bias.

The history of the Theosophical Society in Finland has been dealt with in two previous monographs: Suomen Teosofinen Seura 30-vuotias by Atte POHJANMAA (The Theo-

sophical Society in Finland 30 Years) in 1937 and Teosofinen liike Suomessa (The Theosophical Movement in Finland) by A. E. JOKIPII, also in 1937. The former work must lay under suspicion of bias in favor of the society and the latter for bias against the society.

The central figure within the Theosophical Society in Finland, Pekka Ervast, has been the focus of a tendentious biographical presentation, namely Pekka Ervast, Kirjailija, teosofian tutkija, kristillinen mystikko (Pekka Ervast, Author, Student of Theosophy, Christian Mystic) by Aimo MELA (1956). It is in no way surprising that the Theosophical Society in Finland has not been the focus of more interest on the part of research in the History of Religions. The situation is the same on the international level. Neither the Theosophical Society nor the Anthroposophical Society have so far been the focus of scientific study to even the smallest extent to which corresponds the significance upon the religious field that these movements have had and continue to have.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN THE FINNISH PRESS AROUND 1890

The first notices about the Theosophical Society in the Finnish press were reports of the founding of the Swedish Theosophical Society in Stockholm in 1889. The chief figure in the Swedish society was called Gustaf Zander. It was he who gathered seventeen like-minded persons on 10 February 1889 to a council in his home in Stockholm to discuss the question of establishing a department of the Theosophical Society.

From the introductory presentation which Gustaf Zander made on this occasion it is clear what goals the first theosophists in Sweden had. Zander began by reminding those present what intentions the founders of the Theosophical Society, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Henry Steel Olcott had, when they established the society in New York in 1875. Zander says that these "[...] believed that the concerns of Religion and Science might best be furthered through reviving the study of Sanscrit, Pali, Zend and other ancient literature, in which the wise and initiated of humankind had vouchsafed truths of the highest value concerning nature and man. A society, completely free of all sectarianism, whose task should be carried out in all nations in a spirit of unselfish consecration to finding out the truth, and which with impeccable impartiality should publish the results of this research, could presumably accomplish much in combating materialism and raising the sinking level of religious sentiment'" (ZANDER 1897: 33–34; it is not clear what source Zander is quoting). At the following gathering on 28 February 1889; the officers were presumably elected and installed "[...] and so the theosophical movement had come to Sweden and achieved its first organisation" (ZANDER 1897: 35).

ARTICLES ABOUT THEOSOPHY IN ÅBO TIDNING

The founding of the Theosophical Society in Sweden was noted barely two months later in the Finnish press. In the newspaper Åbo Tidning on 7 April 1889 there appeared an article with the title "Theosophy". This unsigned article is the first presentation of the

Theosophical Society in a Finnish newspaper. The author of the article begins by saying that for a number of years one has heard about "[...] a life view, a religion if you will, which under the name of theosophy from India, where it is most ancient, has wandered into the West and gained more and more supporters" (Teosofi 1889: 1, 6). The writer suggests that contemporary adherence to the established religion is weakening and that there are a number of people who are searching for "something to hold on to". The author sees this as the explanation of the fact that theosophy is successful in Europe. Further, it appears that he considers that many of the theosophical teachings are compatible with "a more modern need for a practical religion, to participate in the struggle for the betterment of ones fellow human beings" (Teosofi 1889: 1, 6).

The correspondent in Åbo Tidning remarks that there have also been published in Finland "[...] certain writings [...] which stand in a certain relationship to the chief concerns of theosophy", namely "'Buddha dens upplyste och hans lära' (The Enlightenment of the Buddha and His Teachings) and the most recent 'Den moderna spiritualismen, dess filosofi och etik' (Modern Spiritualism, its Philosophy and Ethics) by C. R. S(ederholm)" (Teosofi 1889:2, 1). Both of these works had been published in Helsingfors, the first mentioned in 1886 and the latter in 1889. Sederholm had further published Kristendomen och därmed öfverensstämmande religioner och filosofemer, Helsingfors 1888 (Christianity and Religions and Philosophical Systems in Agreement with It).

The correspondent in Åbo Tidning ends his article by remarking that he neither desires to make a statement about the value of the books he has mentioned, nor take a position on the "rightfulness" of theosophy, he only wishes to make the reader aware of this literature, since he is of the opinion that "theosophy is worth taking note of" no matter what one's personal position in regard to religious matters may be. He ends his article with the words: "Let us read first and then judge" (Teosofi 1889: 2, 1).

The first detailed account of the Theosophical Society and its message was an article by Alexander FULLERTON, Hvad är teosofien (Wilkesbarry Letters on Theosophy) published 1891 in the newspaper Nya Pressen. This article was the most important source of information about theosophy for the Finnish public at the beginning of the 1890s. Already in 1889 the newspaper Åbo Tidning had given an account of what theosophical books were available in the Swedish language, but Fullerton's article, which also circulated in the form of an off-print, was accessible in an altogether different way than the books in question.

THE FIRST FINNISH MEMBERS

Theosophical literature, mainly in Swedish, began to be sold in Finland in 1891 (Teosofinen liike 1908: 38; POHJANMAA 1937: 18). In the following year, 1892, the first Finns joined the Swedish Theosophical Society. By way of comparison, it can be mentioned that the Swedish society's first Norwegian and Danish members joined in 1891 (ZANDER 1897: 35). Later in 1892 two more Finns joined the Swedish Theosophical Society. Four of the then altogether six members lived in Helsingfors, one in Viborg and one in Gamlakarleby (ZANDER et al. 1893: 58). In the annual report of the Swedish

Theosophical Society for 1891 Finland is mentioned in connection with the plans of the society to establish an independent section consisting "of Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland" (ZANDER et al. 1892: 58). The plans of the Swedish Theosophical Society to establish a Scandinavian section continued during 1893. At the officers' meeting on 24 September 1893 "[...] the officers proposed to make of the Swedish theosophical society a Scandinavian subsection under the European section of the Theosophical Society and proposed the name 'Scandinavian Theosophical Society', which should consist of all the lodges of the society in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland (the Swedish-speaking section)". The goal of this proposal was explained to be the desire to further the theosophical movement in the countries where "Scandinavian is spoken" (ZETTERSTEN 1893a: 222). This shows that at least Swedish-speaking Finland should be included in the planned subsection.

In Finland at the time there was not yet any local chapter under the auspices of the Swedish Theosophical Society. A short time previously the first local chapter related to the above council was established in Norway, that is on 3 September 1893: "During the past year the wave of the theosophical movement has reached the shores of the capital of our brotherland, Kristiania and many persons living there have joined the society. These, seven (sic!) in number, have now joined themselves and on 3 September formed a new local association of the Swedish T. S. under the name of 'The Norwegian Theosophical Society'" (ZETTERSTEN 1893a: 224).

At the meeting of the Swedish Theosophical Society on 8 October 1893 the final decision was made to establish a Scandinavian subsection including Sweden, Norway, Denmark and the Swedish-speaking part of Finland. It was further decided to hold an annual all-Scandinavian theosophical meeting in the latter half of May (ZETTERSTEN 1893b: 254). On 7 July 1985 the Scandinavian subsection became an independent territorial section of the Theosophical Society, "comprising Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland" (ZANDER et al. 1895: 161).

SWEDISH-SPEAKING THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITY IN FINLAND BEGINS

The earliest information about organized theosophical activity in Finland goes back to 1894: "On 16 January in Helsingfors was established a lodge of the Scand. T. S. We have not yet received more details about the matter" (Teosofiska rörelsen 1894a: 64). There now existed a Finnish lodge and the number of Finnish members in the Scandinavian Theosophical Society had gone up to 20. By way of comparison it may be noted that the number of members in Norway at the same time was 12, the number of Danish members was 8 and the number of Swedish members was 266 (ZANDER 1894: 65). Although the number of Finnish members from a Nordic perspective seems rather high a correspondent from the Teosofisk Tidskrift considered that the reason more interested persons in Finland did not join the Scandinavian section was because of "[...] the poor practical usefulness such a step seems to be, considering that within the borders of the homeland there was found no lodge or association, in a word, no central

organisation for a systematically and practically run work" (Teosofiska rörelsen 1894b: 255).

On 14 October 1894 it was decided to found a theosophical association in Helsingfors. It was decided to meet every second Sunday; on this occasion members who had prepared beforehand could present a matter for discussion (Teosofiska rörelsen 1894b: 256).The number of Finnish members inscribed in the Swedish society by the time the association was established had increased to about 30, a remarkably high number. (Teosofiska rörelsen 1895: 60).

HELSINGFORS CENTRE

In the February 1895 number of the Teosofisk Tidskrift there is again a report on the theosophical activity in Finland. It says that the Helsingfors theosophical association, here called "Helsingfors Centre" has met every other Sunday in "the chairman's home" and that "the association is developing a notable activity and a lively production of theosophical essays both in the original and in translation." One of the meetings (2 December 1894) had been open to the public. The association is presented as having acquired "a considerable theosophical literature" as a gift of the Swedish society, a gift that should form the basis of a library of its own (Teosofiska rörelsen 1895: 63). On 2 October 1896 the Scandinavian Theosophical Society had 447 members of whom 44 were Finns; of these 41 were so-called free-standing members and three were inscribed in Swedish lodges (the number of Swedes was 353, the number of Norwegians 32 and the number of Danes 18; of the total number of members 281 were men and 166 were women. These statistics conflict with the contention that the members of the Theosophical Society have been mainly women). The number of Swedish lodges in the Scandinavian Section was 14, and in addition there were one Norwegian and one Danish lodge. In regard to Finland it is noted: "Besides the local association existing in Helsingfors a new one has been established in Hangö. These associations are not official." Two months after the annual meeting of the Swedish Theosophical Society in May 1896, Gustaf Zander, who was installed as general secretary at the same meeting, sent a letter together with 42 like-minded to the president of the Theosophical Society, H. W. Olcott, in which he stated that the undersigned relinquished their membership in the Scandinavian Section and in place of it intended to found a new society "according to the same plan as those already existing in America, England and Ireland." This means that Zander took the part of Judge in the quarrel between Besant and Judge and followed its consequences. Zander founded a new society which was called "Svenska Teosofiska Samfundet" (Swedish Theosophical Society) with the parallel name of "Teosofiska Samfundet i Europa (Sverige)" (Theosophical Society in Europe [Sweden]). In Norway also was established a Judge sympathetic society under the name of "T. S. E. [that is, Teosofiska Samfundet i Europa] (Norway)" (ZANDER 1896: 275; Teosofiska rörelsen 1896: 311; ZETTERSTEN 1897: 169). The members who left the society in the autumn of 1896 and established the "Swedish Theosophical Society" reorganised themselves in May 1898 under the name of "Universella Broderskapet" (The Universal Brotherhood). A hundred or so members,

among them Gustaf Zander, did not accept this, and wanted to continue with the earlier organisation, and so did not follow the others into the Universal Brotherhood. (ZWETTERSTEN 1898a: 285–286).

After a lapse of two years more information about the situation in Finland appears in the March 1897 number of Teosofisk Tidskrift. It reports that the Theosophical Library in Helsingfors opened on 10 January 1897. The library opened on 10 January 1897 and in the beginning it was open to the public three days a week in the afternoons and the demand for books was lively. When the library was founded, it may be remarked, the facilities were small, but nevertheless made possible meetings of "smaller groups". An example of such a meeting is mentioned for 24 January 1897 when student Pekka Ervast held a lecture on the subject "The Secret Doctrine" in Swedish and that "this will be translated to Finnish, and this will be the beginning of the transmission of the truths of theosophy in that melodical and beautiful language." Pekka Ervast refers again to the establishment of the library in a notice from 1905 and says that one can regard the opening of the Theosophical Library in Helsingfors on the first of January 1887 (sic!) as a token that the spiritual and religious life in Finland began to become freer. He notes that Finnish language theosophical literature at the time was not successful. Indeed, the tiny Swedish-speaking theosophical cradle which generally gathered in the library discussed the need for such literature (ERVAST 1905a: 27).

A theosophical discussion association was founded on 11 December 1897. It had its first meeting on 9 January 1898. The association had about 40 members and met once a month (Teosofiska rörelsen 1898: 93; Teosofinen liike 1908: 39). Pekka Ervast writes ten years later that the discussion association was the result of negotiations at the Helsingfors theosophical library concerning the founding of a Theosophical Society of their own in Finland, and he adds that the association was active for several years. (ERVAST 1908: 10).

From the annual report for 1897 of the Theosophical Society's Scandinavian Section it appears that the number of Finnish members in the Theosophical Society's Scandinavian Section on 30 May 1889 was 55. The chairman A. Zettersten says of "our dear brothers and sisters on the other side of the Gulf of Bothnia" the following: "The old Finnish loyalty has not faltered, for the great majority of the Finnish members have remained faithful to the society." By this it can be seen that only a few Finns left the society during the Judge quarrel. It was further noted that the "conditions" in Finland, that is the political conditions, did not permit the establishment of a lodge, but that there was a library with a reading-room.

During 1897 a little leaflet was published, Ihminen, miksikä itket? (Man, Why are You Crying?) authored by Pekka Ervast. Pekka Ervast further published on his own account Teosofisk uppslagsbok (A Theosophical Encyclopedia). (ERVAST 1905a 26–27). The annual report for 1898 of the Theosophical Society's Scandinavian Section contains a short report of the theosophical activity in Finland during 1898. It reveals that the Finnish members in the section had increased to 66 (294 in Sweden, 39 in Norway and 49 in Denmark). The activity at the library in Helsingfors had been lively and during the year there had been 600 loans. There had been lectures in the reading-room of the library every Thursday evening, both original lectures and translations and there had been much

discussion of different theosophical questions. Helsingfors Discussion Association now had 50 members, among whom also persons who were not inscribed in the Theosophical Society's Scandinavian Section. There was a great interest in questions having to do with comparative religion research. (ZANDER 1899: 164, 169–170; Teosofinen liike 1908: 39).

During the beginning of 1899 activity slumped. "During the year 1899 nevertheless the activity in the theosophical sphere was significantly less for recognizable reasons. The deeply inauspicious political conditions have been not only depressing but have taken up more or less all the time and thoughts" (ZANDER 1899: 164, 169–170).

The political freeze began. The first comprehensive russification plan began with Nikolaj Bobrikov's appointment to the general governorship in 1898. He wanted, for example, to dismantle the country's own army; it should become part of the Russian army. He considered that "Russia's dignity" required that Finland should be administrated only by Russian statutes so that the country should appear from the outside as a Russian province. He wanted public official positions to be open to Russians. His ambitions were crowned with success on 15 February 1899 when the Czar Nicholas II signed an ordinance which provided that national laws, that is, laws applicable to the entire empire including Finland, as well as laws applying only to Finland but which could be seen to be of significance to the whole empire, should be administered in the Russian legislative order. This led to reawakened but fruitless protests on the side of the Finns.

Because of the political situation the Thursday evenings in the library continued in a more private form. At this time Annie Besant's Introduction to Theosophy was published in Finnish in a translation by Pekka Ervast under the title of Johdantoa teosofiaan. Several private persons subscribed to the costs (Teosofinen liike 1908: 39; Besant's book had appeared in 1989 in Sweden under the title of En inledning till teosofien). Ervast comments on the publication of Besant's book in Omatunto 1905: "[...] in the autumn of 1899 Annie Besant's book in Finnish translation, 'Johdantoa teosofiaan' [...] Theosophy was all but an unknown word to the Finnish public" (ERVAST 1905a: 27).

Information about the theosophical activity in Finland during the year 1900 is very sparse. It does indeed appear that during this year in Viborg "a few interested theosophists" founded a library with theosophical, spiritistic and related literature in Swedish, Norwegian and English (a collection of 125 books). Some of the books had been donated from Sweden and some had been bought. The library was open every day (Teosofiska rörelsen 1900: 288; Teosofinen liike 1908: 39). The only information about activity in Helsingfors to be found is that the Thursday meetings in the Theosophical Library continued throughout the year (Teosofinen liike 1908: 39).

The report of the annual meeting of The Swedish Theosophical Society's Scandinavian Section for 1901 notes that the number of members in Finland during the year 1900 was 63 (310 in Sweden, 40 in Norway and 89 in Denmark). (ÅRSMÖTE 1901: 143–144).

In 1901 there began theosophical activity in the Finnish language. From January to May 1901 a weekly paper was published, Uusi Aika (New Time), containing Pekka Ervast's so-called theosophical letters. Ervast expresses himself in a notice from 1905 about the founding of Uusi Aika: "It was a bold attempt in 1901 when Uusi Aika was founded.

This weekly did not last long, but it played its part: it made the name of theosophy known to a wider circle." (ERVAST 1905a: 27).

The editor V. Palomaa, who according to his own report, became interested in theosophy through Uusi Aika, began to hold regular lectures on Sunday mornings in the facilities of the workers' union in Sörnäs "Vuorela" (Teosofinen liike 1908: 40). Among a score of listeners was found the editor in chief of the newspaper where Palomaa was working. After Palomaa's lectures Palomaa's and Ervast's right to use the workers' union facilities in Helsingfors and to spread theosophical "humbug" there was rescinded. In its place arose the possibility for Palomaa from the beginning of autumn 1901 to hold lectures in the workers' union facilities in Sörnäs "Vuorela" and there he alone held theosophical lectures every Sunday in Finnish for the next two years, after which Pekka Ervast and a person named Maria Ramstedt in 1903 began to alternate with Palomaa in holding the lectures. This form of activity continued for several years.

For Christmas 1901 Ervast published on his own account the book Valoa kohti (Towards Light). In contained the "lectures about the teachings of theosophy", which he had earlier published in Uusi Aika. (Teosofinen liike 1908: 39–40).

From the beginning of 1903 there is a report on the theosophical activity in Finland during the year 1902, produced by Herman Hellner. Hellner remarks that it was still impossible to organise the theosophical movement in Finland because of the political conditions, "since freedom of expression and action are too limited to allow it". Despite all "[...] during 1902 sympathy for theosophy had put down deep roots, especially among the 'working classes' around Helsingfors". Hellner states that theosophy was known as far north as the province of Kemi. He considered that the population had "a tendency to the religious and the mystical", and that both augured well for the future of theosophy in Finland. (Teosofiska rörelsen 1903: 21–22; cf Teosofinen liike 1908: 39).

Information on the theosophical activity in Finland during 1903 is very sparse. In the January-February number of Teosofisk Tidskrift for 1904 there is a short report about Finland dealing with activity during 1903. It says that the interest in theosophy in Finland "continues" to be very great.

THEOSOPHICAL ACTIVITY OUTSIDE HELSINGFORS

Now theosophical activity began to appear in other parts of the country. In Kouvola the first theosophical lectures are known to have been held already in the autumn of 1902. After that the interest in theosophy in this area increased all the time. Also from Lahtis there are reports of theosophical activity. A correspondent in Omatunto tells about people in working circles who did not consider themselves materialists, and would willingly ally themselves with other doctrines than those of Christianity to satisfy their inner needs. They then found theosophical literature and this was what they had been looking for. They wanted to make theosophy known to all and decided to organize lecture events.

PLANS TO FOUND A FINNISH THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Now there arose more and more often the desire among theosophists in Finland to organize a society of their own with their own lodges both in cities and in the countryside. Wherever there were at least seven persons they could found a lodge. (ERVAST 1905b: 148).

At the end of 1905 political changes were introduced in Finland, namely the so-called peaceful revolution, which meant that plans to found a Theosophical Society in Finland could be brought forward in earnest, or as Ervast expresses it: "The great peaceful revolution of 1905 was a turning point in our situation[...] Now the old question arose again about founding our own society and it was discussed enthusiastically among the members of both the Scandinavian Section and among the great many Finnish theosophists who over the years had learned to consider theosophy as a worldview and to commit themselves to the theosophical idea." Only after "the November days, when Finland took its first steps as a cultural nation, only then begins the history of the founding of the T. S. Finnish Section." (ERVAST 1908: 10).

During 1906 the lecturing activity continued in Helsingfors in the same way as before while activity in other parts of Finland increased. The activity during the whole of 1907 was dominated by the continuing attempts to found a society of their own. Meeting activity continued during the autumn of 1907 in the same way as earlier (Teosofinen liike 1908: 42). There were now founded lodges in Viborg, Nokia, Kurikka, Åggelby, Sörnäs, and two in Helsingfors (of the lodges in Helsingfors one was Swedish-speaking. (Tien varrelta 1907a: 234). An eighth lodge, "Aura", was founded in Åbo in November 1907 (Tien varrelta 1907b: 251–252; ERVAST 1908: 23). In the first annual report of the Finnish section there is a report on the activity of these lodges during the end of 1907, that is, in principle for the period from 21 October to 31 December 1907. A number of these lodges had actually existed informally before 21 October 1907, but they were formally instituted as lodges on 21 October. But, for example, the Swedish-speaking lodge "Vågen" in Helsingfors had already existed for a decade.

THE FOUNDING OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN FINLAND

The beginning of preparations for founding a Theosophical Society in Finland goes back to the year 1906. "We have written to the head, Olcott, the president and founder of the Theosophical Society, explained our situation to him and asked for his counsel, and we have a certain hope that already next autumn we shall be able to leave our application with the Senate for ratification". Olcott was in Paris at the moment. In the letter to him, which was sent May 1 1906, he was informed of the Finnish initiative to found a section of their own (Tien varrelta 1906a: 141; ERVAST 1908: 10). In the June number of Omatunto it appears that an answer from Olcott had been received, which says that he understood and approved the plan to found a Finnish section apart from the Scandinavian. Olcott hints that he might come to Finland during the latter part of July 1906, after participating in the annual meeting of the British section in London. On the Finnish side

it was rather noted that it would be impossible to get a Finnish society legalised by that time, and it was felt that such a time would not be auspicious for a private visit on Olcott's part since all theosophical activity was low during the summer. For this reason Olcott did not come to Finland on this occasion and circumstances never allowed him to come to Finland later either (Tien varrelta 1906b: 161–162).

Plans to found a Finnish Society are taken up again in November 1906. On 3 March 1907 about 80 persons gathered in Helsingfors (among others two theosophists from Viborg) to discuss the question of founding a Finnish section. At the meeting Ervast reported first on the work of the committee. It appeared that it would be possible to found 8 (sic!) lodges. Pekka Ervast notes later that this meeting was not especially successful. He says himself that he was "away in spirit". Ervast says that there appeared a rupture between the Swedish- and Finnish-speaking theosophists. The Swedish-speaking ones, who were members in the Scandinavian Section, began to quibble that two such peoples as the Finns and the Swedish Finns could co-operate in an intellectual and spiritual brotherhood. In this situation it was finally decided to appeal to Annie Besant" (ERVAST 1908: 15). So the committee turned to Annie Besant in March 1907 with an application to have the society ratified; she had succeeded H. S. Olcott in January 1907 as president.

On 15 September 1907 at 6 p.m. was finally held the third and final constituting meeting of the Theosophical Society's Finnish Section, in which about 80 theosophists took part. After 21 October 1907 the Scandinavian Section not longer accepted members from Finland. Only old members who did not wish to transfer to the Finnish section were allowed to remain (Tien varrelta 1907b: 251–252). The application of the Theosophical Society was handed in on 22 November 1907 to the Imperial Senate with an appeal to ratify the application (Tien varrelta 1907c: 274–276). The answer to this appeal came only five years later in the form of a negative. On the theosophists' side the consternation was all the greater because of the fact that the Theosophical Society had already during that time been permitted in Russia. It was noted in the Senate decision on February 1913 that the members of the Theosophical Society had not left the State Church and therefore the society was considered a scientific association (Tien varrelta 1913: 108).

SUMMARY

The results of the investigation of the origins of the Theosophical Society in Finland are to illuminate a religious movement of a very special type. This movement lacks one of the most important components in every religion or religious movement, namely liturgy. The Theosophical Society is a religious movement without a liturgical gathering. It has become apparent that the members come together to hold lectures for one another and also to discuss the contents of the lectures. The theme of the lecture generally turns on existential, religious and occult questions. Meetings are often begun and ended with music, which is used also to mark new points in the program, but there is no prayer nor offering, no liturgy and no preaching. In the absence of a regular liturgy, the lecture becomes a substitute for divine service and has a ritual function. The fact that the Theosophical Society itself does not wish to categorize theosophy as a religion or religious

movement is not relevant in this context. In the book Handbuch Religiöse Gemeinschaften, Freikirchen, Sondergemeinschaften, Sekten, Weltanschauungsgemeinschaften, Neureligionen, Gütersloh 1979, under the title of "Weltanschauungen (Weltanschauungsgemeinschaften) (Neuzeitliche Weltdeutungssysteme mit religiösen Funktionen, aber weitgehend ohne Kultgemeinschaft)" there are described seven movements, among them theosophy and anthroposophy (the other five are the Rosicrucian movement, spiritism, transcendental meditation along with two purely German movements, die Welt-Spirale and Aktionsanalytische Organisation.) Without taking a position on the other five movements, I remark that the placement of Theosophy and Anthroposophy in this group is well motivated.

From the information that has appeared about the activity of the Theosophical Society in Finland one can remark that it is mainly the intellectual aspect in religion which is of interest to theosophy, without thereby making any judgment about the intellectual level of the theosophical doctrine. The way in which the Theosophical Society established itself in Finland is consistent with the assumption that it is the intellectual aspect in religion which is of interest to theosophy. Interest in the matter is spread through the holding of lectures about the theosophical faith and giving the possibility to discuss this doctrine (the fact that theosophists themselves claim that their doctrine is not a form of religious belief but rather a form of scientific knowledge only means that they believe that this is so, not that it is so). It appears that as many as hundreds of listeners have attended the public theosophical lecture events, which shows that the theosophists were touching issues of vital concern. That the Theosophical Society did not attract an especially great number of members as compared to the high attendance in the public lectures corresponds to a conscious purpose among the theosophists: they were not trying to gather great crowds into their own society; rather they wanted to inform people about where the true religion was to be found and about how an individual by the aid of it could develop himself faster than he could without this knowledge, and this laid upon them the obligation to arrange lecture events for the public.

Consistent with lecturing as a means of marketing the movement is the great importance given to the publication of books about theosophy, both original books and translations of foreign theosophists. It was noted that interest in theosophy among the Finns was found mainly among persons belonging to the so-called working class; in Helsingfors this interest was concentrated on the members of the Sörnäs workers' union. This places Finland in a special place as concerns the interest in theosophy, which in other contexts, in the Western world, appears mainly among the higher classes (cf JOKIPII 1937: 38). I contend that the origin of this is quite wholly and simply on the personal level, namely in the fact that Veikko Palomaa had a position working for a socialist newspaper while at the same time he became a theosophist and that he and Pekka Ervast intended to make of theosophy the new religion of the workers, since Christianity rejected socialism, and in the fact that they also got support from the utopian socialist Matti Kurikka.

Special for theosophy in the Western world is the type of racial problem in which the Finnish theosophists developed. It is a racial problem in which the color of the skin is not a central criterion. It was an unfortunate coincidence that Blavatsky's idea that the Finns were a more developed people than the Swedes came to coincide with the fact that a

great proportion of the Swedish Finns belonged to the so-called instructed class at the turn of the century in Finland.

The presentation has shown who the principle figures were when the Theosophical Society was established in Finland. On the Swedish Finnish side it was Herman Hellner with the support of Pekka Ervast, and on the Finnish side it was Pekka Ervast with the support of Veikko Palomaa and Maria Ramstedt.

The reasons why theosophical activity in Finland during the first ten years took place mainly in the Swedish language have already been touched upon many times. When theosophical activity began in Sweden in 1889 publication of theosophical literature in Swedish also began as well as a monthly journal, and this literature reached Swedish-speaking Finns. Therefore Swedish-speaking Finns could inscribe as members of the Swedish Theosophical Society, which they also did.

What role was played by the fact that the authorities did not permit the establishment of a society of their own before 1907 for the activity of the theosophical movement in Finland? It has appeared that already in 1887 people began discussing the question of founding a Finnish society of their own. This meant that it was necessary to exist for a decade without the form of organisation that was desired. But did this have some inhibiting effects on the theosophical activity in the country? In my judgment it hardly had such consequences. The theosophists had, already in the middle of the 1890s, the right to found a library with a reading-room and the right to hold public lectures and the right to publish theosophical literature. They got the right, if also after a long wait, to publish their own paper.

Considering the way in which the Theosophical Society carried out its activities one can remark that the movement in the first place strove to raise the religious knowledge of its members and place them among people who have thoughtful opinions about existential questions.

What meaning and impact did the theosophical movement have on the religious area in Finland at the end of the 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s? According to the number of members in the movement, little, but through the number of participants at public lectures significantly more. It is nonetheless clear that the importance of the theosophical movement as compared for example to the Lutheran State Church was purely marginal, quantitatively speaking. But its importance in introducing new doctrinal points of non-Christian provenance should not be underestimated. It was through the Theosophical Society that the population of Finland learned of such doctrines as reincarnation and karma. Persons who actually visited the theosophical lecture events and acquired theosophical literature came to know an alternative to the Christian worldview, and even if such people are numbered only in hundreds and thousands rather than in tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands, the Theosophical Society succeeded well in entering a religious market which was almost entirely dominated by the Lutheran State Church.

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ON THE FINNISH PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOSITY AND THE NEW AGE THOUGHT

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1. ON THE NEW AGE THOUGHT

The New Age Movement is a cultural phenomenon that has more than one meaning. Virtually it is not a religious movement, because it has no consistent doctrine or structure, but it is rather an umbrella-like concept that includes many things: e.g. so called alternative religious communities, groups and cults, but also other kinds of spiritual thinking that can be found in the Western culture and society. The concept "New Age" is based on Alice Bailey's theosophical thinking, where it means that mankind and the whole universe has – after the Second World War – reached a turning point. According to her mankind faces a total change of human culture, a leap to new spiritual reality. (See HEINO 1997: 33.)

The New Age Thought was mentioned for the first time in the late 1960s in a few articles published by some North-American journals.[1] The articles spoke about a huge spiritual hunger that can be perceived in the Western World, and the disability of the traditional churches to feed the hunger. The New Age Movement was considered as an attempt to create a social, religious, political and cultural convergence that would unite the new mystical religious thinking of the East to the secularized Western World.

The first New Age book shops and centers were opened in the early 1970s in the USA, but the spiritual background of the movement in the West is more far away in the history, in those religious movements that emphasize the mystical experience and the religions of the East, movements like Spiritualism, Theosophy, Anthroposophy, New Thought, Christian Science and so on. All these movements accept some kind of transcendentalism.

When the New Age idea was developed, the activists started to create a network that consisted of those communities and groups that had been founded on the ruins of the hippie movement of the 60s. (JUNNONAHO 1996: 40–60) but the network included also different occult and mystical Eastern religions, metaphysical book shops, groups of psychic and mental development, alternative health centers, and practically all possible groups of so called alternative religiosity.

The New Age Thought can be defined rather as a vision and an experience than as a belief system. The most important thing seems to be a radical mystic change on the indi-

[1] The brief introduction to the New Age Thought in this paper is mainly based on Gordon J. Melton's article "The New Age Movement" (MELTON 1986).

vidual level. It can consist of such new realities as discovery of psychic capacity, physical or mental healing experience, outburst of new human resources or approval of a new view of the universe. The most essential is that the new individual vision is adapted to society and the world, because basically New Age means an altered world, the heaven on the Earth.

One basic feature in the New Age Thought is the idea of Universal Power or Energy that makes the individual change possible. The Energy is called by several names (as "prana", "mana", "the Holy Spirit", "chi'i" and so on), and it is believed that it can heal any illness or disease. The Energy is believed to be released under meditation or some therapy, and it is believed that the Energy is flowing between human beings when they love each other. In this connection it is also possible to speak about one universal religion regardless of whatever it is called.

Another very common idea in the New Age Thought is the belief in reincarnation that is one of the most central concepts in many Eastern religions, and that has – special thanks to the Theosophical Movement – been known for more than one hundred years in the Western world.

One factor that has made the New Age Movement so tempting and popular here in the West is its concern about the future of the Globe. The individual movements within the New Age Thought may differ from each other in many ways and details, but they can share the same concern for world peace, starvation, natural production of food, natural care of health, and so on. On the other hand, it is very common that the New Age People seek their ways to astrologers, clairvoyants or spiritual mediums.

2. ON THE FINNISH HISTORY OF RELIGION

To understand the present-day religious situation in Finland some knowledge of the Finnish history of religion is needed. In the pre-Christian age – during maybe six thousand years – people living in Finland had their own ethnic religion. It was based on the same kind of elements as many other primitive religions: shamanism, ancestor worship, spirit belief and so on. (See e.g. SIIKALA 1987.) Unfortunately we have no time to describe it more detailed now, but in any case it was the soil for the Christian faith.

The first Christian influences came to Finland almost one thousand years after the dawn of Christianity. The very first effects came from the Eastern Church via Russia, but it were the three organized crusades from Sweden that started the Roman Catholic influence in Finland in the 12th century. The Orthodox influences affected mostly the Eastern parts of the country. (JUNNONAHO 1995: 1–3.)

From the 16th century, the Lutheran reformation started in Finland very effectively, and the Catholic Church was forbidden in Sweden and Finland in 1520 by the strong Swedish king Gustav Vasa. Then Finland developed into a Lutheran country where all other religious affiliations were illegal, and it was compulsory for every Finnish citizen to be a member of the Finnish Evangelical-Lutheran Church. By the end of the 19th century the Finnish Lutheran Church ruled practically the whole Finnish religious, cultural and social life. Keeping that in mind we have to observe, that at the same time the Finnish

ethnic religion still had some influence, specially among the rural people. In fact we can say that the Finnish religious situation was for almost one thousand years – quite much a syncretistic one, where the ethnic religion and the Christian Faith coexisted.

Of course the ethnic religion was loosing its influence all the time, and the Christian Church was increasing its power, because it was the only acceptable and legal religion in Finland. (JUNNONAHO 1995: 1–3)

When the Lutheran Church had gained the total hegemony in the Finnish society, the great industrial, social and idealistic revolution started in Europe, including Finland. That meant quite essential changes in the Finnish society also from the religious point of view, from the viewpoint of the Lutheran Church, to speak exactly. It meant that the Finnish society had to start a new development towards religious freedom, because numerous new religious groups both Christian and non-Christian – had started their activities in Finland, e.g. some new Anglo-American Christian sects (Pentacostalism, Jehovah's Witnesses, Adventism, Methodism), Theosophical Movement, Buddhism, Islam and Judaism. The process went on for several decades, and the prevailing law of religious freedom in Finland was made in 1922. Together with that process also the secularization started, and we can say that after the Second World War the Finnish society has been more or less secularized in the same sense as any other Western European country. (JUNNONAHO 1995: 4–11.)

3. ON THE PRESENT-DAY RELIGIOSITY IN FINLAND

Statistically Finland seems to be a very homogeneous country from the religious point of view, because still about 86 per cent of the people are members of the Finnish Evangelical-Lutheran Church. The membership of the Orthodox Church, and the Pentecostal movement is about one per cent of the Finnish population each. All other religious churches and communities are much smaller. Little more than 11 per cent of the Finns are not members of any religious community, at least from the statistical point of view. All inquiries show that about 5 to 7 percent of the Finns are atheists or so called freethinkers. (Suomen tilastollinen vuosikirja 1995.)

The membership of a religious community is not, however, the only criterion to measure the religiosity of people, because it is possible to be a member of church without being a so called believer, and it is possible to be a believer without being a member of any religious community. The religiosity of the Finns seems to be extremely interesting, if we think that about 86 per cent are members of the Lutheran Church, and only 2 to 3 percent go to church on Sundays.

The Research Center of the Finnish Lutheran Church started to measure the religiosity of Finnish people with Gallup polls in the late 1970s. (SIHVO 1979.) In these surveys one of the most important indicators of religiosity has been belief in God. It has been asked if the Finnish adults believe in personal God, and if they believe, in which way. According to the inquiries about 30 to 35 per cent answer that believe in God as the Church teaches it, and about 30 per cent answer that they believe in God but in some

other way. But the inquiries do not tell directly, in which other way or ways. (SUNDBACK 1995.)

There are also differences in the results of the polls depending on age, education, place of residence, political view, sex and occupation of the informants. (E.g. SIHVO 1979.)

We can say that the older informant is, the more traditional belief in God he/she has. Younger people say more often than older people that they believe in God in some other way than the Church teaches.

From the educational viewpoint we can say that the less education people have, the more traditonal belief in God they have; on the other hand the more education they have, the more modern belief in God they have, if we think that believing in God in some other way than the Church teaches is something modern.

Furthermore, the results of the polls reveal that people in rural regions believe in God in a more traditional way than people in big cities (like Helsinki and the neighboring cities). And women are more traditional in their beliefs than men. And finally, we can notice that the more in the left the informant's political view is, the more radical or modern is his/her belief in God. The members of the Conservative Party and the Center Party are equally conservative/traditional in their beliefs in God.

Table

Religiosity in Finland according to EVSSG 1990 (Percentage. N = 588)

	Generations	
	All	Younger*
1 Has received religious socialization in home	58	33
2 Is a religious person	54	36
3 Meaning of life is dependent on God	31	14
4 Believes in God	65	48
5 Believes in personal God	32	23
6 Believes in life after death	44	43
7 Believes in resurrection of the dead	37	35
8 Receives consolation and strength from religion	43	27
9 Praying is a habit	28	18
10 Denies personal importance of God	12	20
11 Never goes to church	14	25
12 Believes in spirit/'power'	46	45
13 Believes in reincarnation	24	20
14 Meditates/contemplates	24	16

(* 18–25 years-olds)

In the same inquiries it has also been asked, if the Finns believe in 'spirit' or 'power', in reincarnation, and if they are meditating. All these are, in my opinion, indications of the so called New Age Thought. The results of the surveys show that almost half of the

Finnish people believe in 'spirit' or 'power', and every fourth Finn says that he/she believes in reincarnation, and is a meditator. (SUNDBACK 1995: 100, table 4.3.)

It is quite obvious that this kind of research approach can always be heavily criticized, but in my opinion, it unquestionably shows that the New Age Thought is clearly visible in the Finnish religiosity, and in the Finnish culture in general. Based on the results of the polls it is, of course, impossible to say reliably how important an impact the New Age Thought has on the Finnish religiosity. We can only say that it is perceivable. And it can be observed also outside this kind of inquiries. In any media (newspapers, journals, TV, radio, Internet an so on), in the Finnish discourse on the whole, we can see signs of the New Age Thought daily. Somehow it seems to be a natural part of the contemporary Finnish everyday-life and popular religion. And from the viewpoint of the comparative study of religion the most important observation is that the impact of the New Age Thought on the Western culture is a sign of the fact that the meaning of the concept of religion has quite radically changed during the last few decades.

The first and perhaps the most striking characteristic of the late-modern spirituality is that of the emphasis on individual choice. The phrase describes the way that members of the postwar generation involve themselves so called "cafeteria" style in religion. They reject a fixed menu and pick and choose religious alternatives, including the alternative to disaffiliate altogether from religion. The people reject the authority of religious traditions and institutions to prescribe from the top down what one should believe, how one should practice his or her religion, or how one should live morally as a religious person. Instead, they view these matters in much the same way that they view choice of life style and consumption patterns: as individual prerogative. It has been said that "Cogito ergo sum" may now be understood as I think and I choose My practices to express My religious feelings and My beliefs and norms. Robert Bellah argues that this "expressive individualism" reveals a culture "whose center is the autonomous individual, presumed able to choose the roles he/she will play and the commitments he/she will make, not on the basis of higher truths, but according to the criterion of life-effectiveness as the individual judges it. (ROOF et al. 1994: 248)

And as a consequence of the growth of choice, a second common theme is that of faith exploration among diverse religious traditions what some have called *a mixing of codes*. As people move in and out of religious involvement they explore and experiment with various religious and spiritual possibilities, and they often construct their own personal form of spirituality. Many draw their religious beliefs and practices from a variety of sources, both religious and non-religious – for example, Eastern spiritual practices, various forms of New Age spirituality, witchcraft, the ecology movement, psychotherapy, feminism, as well as more traditional Judeo-Christian elements. The result is often a kind of religious pluralism within the individual, a personal "collage" rather than "received one". (ROOF et al. 1995: 250)

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TRENDS OF PIETY IN THE FREE CHURCHES OF HUNGARY IN THE 20TH CENTURY

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In Hungary, the name "free churches" is applied to the small Protestant denominations which – on the basis of their Biblical conviction – insist on the voluntary and active membership in the congregation based on a conscious decision of faith. Churches of this type maintain their congregations as well as their national origins by the voluntary contributions of their church members.

Hungarian free churches are the descendants of late Puritan communities. They keep much of the elements in practising their faith that has been considered to be out-of-date according to the liberal Protestant piety that turned back to pietism. These new denominations reached significant success with their mission-work, strict and old-fashioned Puritan morals. They formed a modern piety that originated in ancient times, but responds the challenges of these days. There are communities, however, among them the Nazaren (Apostolic Christian Church) which stick to the stiff traditions and their members are against any changes although the majority wants to accept the newer and newer challenges of the fast-changing life by being accustomed to those. They seem more flexible and successful than the historical churches which can hardly get used to such changes because of their vast number of members and strict adhering to traditions.

In this short survey I intend to follow the challenges which were accepted by the piety-practice of free churches in the complicated Hungarian society that developed from many ways. The Nazarens appeared at the end of the 1830s in the last century, and the first followers of the Baptists in the middle of the 1840s. They were all lower middle-class citizens. Here the claim was laid, that any confession of faith should be based on personal conviction of faith. That can be practiced in democratic, violence-free, little intimate denominations. But only conscious adult members can materialize these facts. The adult baptism is one of the most important fundamental doctrines of these movements.

These denominatios are linked to the late Puritan Protestant ecclesiae which were to be closed down by the historical churches. What these churches meant was a more liberal way of thinking, fighting for political grounds, and the weakening of morals. I have examined that in many of my studies. The members of these ecclesiae found shelter among the groups of Nazarens and Baptists where they could follow their faith enriched by new elements. That is the reason why the majority of these free churches spread in the villages during the last century: their piety morals, honouring the other's posses-

sion, the purity of spoken words and the practising of love for each other were the bases of piety.

The era of urbanization was nearing in the 19–20th centuries. The closed, producing denominations in the villages weakened. Young people moved to town. This process that generated tensions went through the free churches, too. The close-knit, small denominations were fixed points concerning the difficulties caused by the changed lifestyle. The old Puritan morals were thought to be important however they were modified as a result of the challenges facing them. There was a basic dilemma drawn up in the free churches. "Shall we keep the ancient lifestyle or just apply and practise the Puritan morals by accepting the changes of modern life?"–the conservative asked at the turn of the century, but they were not split from the society unlike the extreme piety groups (like the amish). The Baptists, however, preferred the second option.

Contrary to a few conservative groups they took on the connection with modern life. New free churches were founded following the appearance of new claims. The teetotal, antialcoholist programme of the 100-year-old Methodist mission, the reformed lifestyle of the same-aged Adventist mission and their prophetic historical view gave answers to the men-in-the-street who set out on the way of becoming criticized. These missions applied Puritan basis in a modern form to people living in crisis. The intellectuals of simple origin wanted to live the life of the close-knit, free and democratic denominations (Church of the Brethren, etc.). Jenő Henrik Schmidt's followers propagated the ideal of God's Kingdom on Earth. It had an effect on the marxist and socialist movements at the beginning of the Great World War. These movements carried socially effective plans and their members were zealous and enthusiastic to make these plans real. They published periodicals, books, distributed them and made social services, too.

The movement of free churches became stronger and stronger after the carnage of the World War while helping hands and services based on Christian love were needed in Hungary. The Methodists with the social help programme (Huszár akció) and the Andventists with the work of Tabetha club got high appreciation from the society.The precise programmes of the Salvation Army had just begun at that time, too (free soup acts). But similar efforts of the Baptist Church are also significant. These small churches with a small membership and with an even stronger faith tried to fulfil Jesus' love-command. That could be managed only by activating the members. The basic principle of the piety of free churches was to do something for the others, to help others, to sell books, to earn money to give food and clothes to people in need.

We can find another free church that represents a new piety between the two World Wars: it is the Pentacostal Church. While the members of early free churches were people ambitioned by their Puritan deligent, the pentacostal people propagated a new charismatic feeling to men having poor emotions and experience. That was another kind of religiousness, different from the faith of old Puritan origin.

The emotional storm, the golossolalia, gave a renewal of people's feelings and gave the feeling of the "second Bless" to people with no hopes. This kind of piety different from the others produced antipathy on the side of the free churches. In the pentacostal congregations the attention was turned from the serving of communities to the feeling of one's faith, from the objective act and lifemodel to subjective charismatic gift, in one

word, to the miracle. That is the reason why these communities could become denominations only with great difficulties despite their success.

These trends of free churches can be followed in the practise of piety of historical churches. It is not accidental that the inside mission-work in the last century affected the same strata and emphasized similar ethic principles, and even applied the same methods like free churches. That is the reason why so many times these well-intentioned church-builder movements were condemned to be sectarian, Baptist or Nazaren acts. On the other side, it is interesting that as the historical churches reconciled with the inside mission-work their persecutive power lessened and they became more open towards the free churches, too. It is also interesting that there were groups in the Bethania movements which had some attraction to charismatic manifestation.

So what was the piety of traditional free churches like? Some of its characteristics are the family-atmosphered worships, the singing, the free prayers that were connected to everyday life problems and the sermons based on practical everyday life. The whole life was under the control of faith: job, free time, family; and the sermons were based on practical everyday life. Living the common faith helps to cope with difficulties.

The charismatic service is different. In the centre of it stands the "spiritual controversy", that is the estatic prayer when our words are no longer under the control of conscience. It is associated with intuitive propheting and healing. Furthermore it involves an enthusiastic, emotionally boiled-up state of mind that is followed by relief and free-from-tension feeling, what Christians feel.

The 2nd World War brought new trials in the life of free churches. Most of them were prohibited on 2 December 1939, as they were said to threaten the interest of the national defense. The denominations became closer and more ultimate. At the same time, by getting used to the inner struggle of war events these churches became bigger and stronger. The number of the more active adult members of the Adventist Church tripled in the 1940s but this increase is typical of other denominations, too. The apocalyptic trials of events (wars, holocaust, deportations) produced a new apocalyptic piety of which basic points were to take on trials, to hold on and to be persistent.

But the series of trials did not end after the war. The hard years of personal cult came after a few free years. This kind of dictatorial model of society was based on a strict, central control. That is why the close democratic denominations are thought of as opponents and "agents of imperialism".

Great efforts were made to make these churches visible and controlled. That is the reason why they urged to make the "community" of free churches based on religious liberty become even more closed "councils". Policemen controlled the ministers and employed spies to give information and so they could follow the inside events of the churches. The political power even made an attempt to keep free churches under a more centralized control. Choosing leaders in a democratic way became totally impossible. This fact caused incalculable damage in the denominations that constituted the basis of piety. On the other hand, these outer effects united the denominations of free churches. Being a Christian became a common mark which made members second class citizens within the society. At the same time those churches were appraised by the public. It had many reasons.

The simple vital process and the upright work originated in the Puritan moral became more and more popular after 1956. These persecuted citizens found shelter in human communities. But that balance on the outer pressure began to disintegrate because of the more liberalised ecclesiastical politics in the 1970s.

A strange "vital feeling" strengthened in the members of different free churches as "it used to be better earlier because it was worse. There was much more love in the denominations." The policy of taking small steps got the church leaders to find constant concession and be restricted. That attitude questioned the identity of leaders within the church. That is the reason why so many schisms weakened these denominations. The question was the same: What does it mean to live in the world and apply the Puritan heritage to everyday life?

The partly illegal existence of schismatic groups and the tolerance of the state weakened, consciously or semi-consciously, the traditional free churches.

A new issue of the life of free churches started by the change of the regime. A new charismatic wave developed that searched answers for questions concerning people living estranged in the capitalized World.

Syncretic half Christian faith, representative of a new age, and missions of eastern religion appeared. Examining the strength of these new movements is the task of another study.

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THE REPRESENTATION OF *SÜREM* SACRIFICIAL RITUAL AMONG THE PRESENT-DAY MEADOW-MARI POPULATION IN RUSSIA

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1. INTRODUCTION

In July 1992 I made a short fieldwork trip to the Republic of Mari in Russia with Associate Professor Kaija Heikkinen at the University of Joensuu, Finland. During our visit we had a chance to document a ritual called *sürem pastrymaš* in the small Mari village of Koramas near the border of Tataria. The *sürem* is a sacrifical ritual performed in connection with the St. Peter's Day celebrations on July 12th. The term *sürem* denotes the expelling of the devil[1] and it is equivalent to the Turkic-Tatarian designation of šaitan. Participants in the ritual gather together and sacrifice animals to their God in order to purify their social environment from all that is impure, evil and harmful. During *sürem*-feast sheep, rams and geese are sacrificed in order to ensure the god Kugu Jumo's aid to the growing crop and to the people's efforts in gaining prosperity, health and success. In this presentation I shall examine some of the elements in the *sürem*-ritual and reflect upon its symbolic-cultural significance both in its local and in a wider ethnopolitical context.

2. RELIGIOUS SYSTEMS OF BELIEF IN THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARI

The Mari inhabit a geographical area that extends 23 000 square kilometers between two rivers – Vetluga in the west and the Vjatka in the east. In the southern part of the territory the Volga separates the Mari from the Chuvass over a distance of 100 kilometers. Nowadays there are approximately 700 000 people, who classify themselves as Mari, of whom about 80% (appr. 540 000) speak Mari as their mother tongue. The Mari are divided into three distinct ethnic groups: the Meadow-Mari, the Hill-Mari and the Eastern Mari. The majority of the republic's inhabitants are Meadow-Mari. The number of the Hill-Mari is approximately 10 per cent of the total Mari

[1] The actual expelling ritual have been traditionally performed withtlong birch-bark horns and with whips. Mainly young people and children are marching in processions from one border of the village to the opposite border, blowing their horns and whipping gates, walls, corners of the houses, benches, chairs, etc. The older people chase devils by the windows inside the houses. Horse race has also been an essential part of the *sürem*-ritual. See HÄMÄLÄINEN 1928, 29–34.

population. The Eastern Mari live in the Republic of Bashkiria consisting approximately of 100 000 persons.

The Mari have lived for centuries in close contact with Orthodox Russians and Islamic Tatars. In addition to Orthodox Christianity, their religious culture is shaped by Turkic-Tatar elements which are blended with indigenous systems of belief and forms of ritual representation. Notwithstanding the syncretism, the Mari categorize religious representations according to their ethnic traditions. The Mari who participate in rituals of indigenous religious traditions, but confess the faith of Russian Orthodoxy, are called *rušla vera*, i.e. they are recognized as Russian believers. In the mid-1990's approximately 60 per cent of the Mari population were classified as *rušla vera*. Five to seven per cent are religiously committed to the indigenous systems of belief (designated as 'nature religion'). They identify as *Ošmarij*, the white Mari. Being an *Ošmarij* is tantamount to being an *"imarij*, one who is an adherent of the old faith and thinks of him/herself as a pure Mari.[2] During the 1990's indigenous systems of belief have been revived in the rural villages, but received publicity and adherence also among artists and intellectuals in the cities.

3. THE LOCATION OF THE *SÜREM* RITUAL

The *sürem* ritual I attended was performed in *küs-oto*, which is a Mari designation for the sacred grove dedicated to the Oš Kugu Jumo (the great white god). The *küs-oto* of the Koramas village, where the *sürem* was performed, was partly destroyed in the forties by communists. What has survived from the olden times up to the present is no longer a very impressive grove, but a space with trees and bushes amid the vast corn fields of a collective farm. The sacrificial site was on the edge of a hollow with a huge linden tree as a distinctive topographic marker. The linden tree was still used as a sacrificial tree. Its branches were covered with white cloths which the local population had brought there as votive sacrifices.

The ritual was organized by the *Ošmarijs* of seven villages. The participants were mostly older men and women. The men sat in the shade of the trees at one end of the grove where they were joined by foreign visitors and reporters. Two men who acted as sacrificial priests, called *kart* in Mari language, were helped by both men and women who prepared the ritual setting and who assisted in the sacrifices. The older of the *karts* recited prayers by heart while the younger one seemed to be a novice as a sacrificial priest: he was reading the prayers from a little green book that had been published in Joškar-Ola in 1991.[3] The religious folklore of the past generations is no longer transmitted in oral communication, but recycled from the archival sources back to the ritual contexts through publications.

The ritual scene was constructed around three main centers of activity: 1) the site where the animals were sacrificed and flayed, 2) the site where the trunks of linden trees

[2] TOJDYBEKOVA 1998: 262. > V. ŠABYKOV & S. ISANBAJEV 1995: 126–128.

[3] The collection of traditional Mari prayers is edited by Nikandr POPOV 1991.

were set up in order to hold the cauldrons over the fire and 3) the two sites that were set apart as altars. Small sacrificial trees were erected on both places on the ground as a token of their sacrality, and white towels were tied around their branches as a sign of their purity. Food and candles were placed in front of and on both sides of the sacrificial tree. The ritual procedures were performed in an order which followed the animals' transition from their existence as biological entities into spiritual substances. As their throats were cut and their blood drained off in the sacred context of the ritual, the animals were transformed into vehicles for religious symbolization. The ritual displayed the meaning of blood as the symbolic vehicle by which the distinction between human and animal forms of living is transcended and united in the name of the god. It is the culture-specific category of the god according to which the members of *Ošmarij* communities define not only the corporeality of human beings, the gender distinctions and the relationship between human beings and animals, but also the boundaries of their ancestral land which gives life to all forms of existence. The idea of the god and the idea of the holy ground are intertwined in the cognitive-symbolic systems of *Ošmarij* popular thinking.

Addressed with the attribute *kugu* (the great) the god *Jumo* receives the souls of the sacrificed sheep, rams and geese, while the ritual participants cook the meat in the cauldrons and bring it to the altar and ask Jumo's blessing before distributing and eating it. The altar and the branch of linden tree erected on the ground as a sacrificial tree symbolically represent Jumo's presence in every stage of the ritual transformations.

4. THE MAIN SEQUENCES IN THE RITUAL

A. PRELIMINARY ACTIONS BEFORE THE SACRIFICE

The first victim of the day is a lamb. The animal is tied fast to a pole with a rope made of linden bark. An assistant to the *kart* makes sure that the lamb is acceptable as a sacrifice to the god, and the touch of human hands is washed off as the *kart*'s assistant pours water on the animal's back and strokes it with a spruce twig. Cold water is expected to cause shudders in the animal, and this is regarded as a sign of acceptance from the god.

B. SACRIFICIAL PRIESTS START RECITING PRAYERS TO THE GOD BEFORE THE ANIMAL IS FLAYED

"O the great God of sürem! The prophet, the messenger! Today on July 13th, on great Monday, the Mari people are gathered together prostrating and praying in front of you. Bless this day! We are the Ošmarij people. With unstarted bread, with unstarted honey-beer, with a candle, with cloven-footed and fur-bearing animals we beg you to give us happiness, health, happiness for our children, health, sensibility, good life for our families, protect us from headaches, fire, waves, bless our cattle, do not let our financial resources run dry! Give also prosperity to our collective farm![4]

[4] The prayers in the videotape material of the sürem-ritual were translated from Mari into Finnish by Professor Sirkka Saarinen at the University of Turku. The English translation is by the present author.

C. SLAUGHTERING THE LAMB

Before the lamb is sacrificed, it is untied from the pole. Its feet are, however, tied together with a rope of linden bark. The animal is thrown over on its left side so that its head is pointing to the direction of the sacrificial tree in the altar. The lamb is slaughtered by cutting its throat and draining off its blood into a pit dug in the ground nearby the head. While the blood is draining off from the lamb's throat vessels, the *kart* holds a rope of linden bark in his hands and wets it in the blood above the pit.

D. WHILE MEAT IS BOILING IN THE CAULDRONS

A small linden tree is erected on the ground as a sacrificial tree and as a marker of the sacred space set apart for the altar. White towels are tied around its branches in order to mark the purity of the altar. The bloody rope of linden bark is also taken to the sacrificial tree and placed on its branches by the *kart*. Women participants bring bundles of wheat bread, curd cakes and home-made honey-beer with them as they arrive at the ritual site. The pastry is wrapped around newspapers; women open them up and place them on the altar. Adult participants in the ritual, including also us who were there as guests, were adviced to perform a candle and a coin sacrifice. Those of the participants and guests who followed the advice, knelt down, made the sign of a cross with hands and placed a thin honey-wax candle on the candle-holder in the ground. A small coin was put inside the loaves. Every person donating a candle and a coin said a silent prayer. There was also a bowl on the altar where the participants in the ritual donated both coins and paper money, rubels. The money is needed for arranging future rituals.

E. AFTER THE BOILING, MEAT CAULDRONS ARE BROUGHT TO THE ALTAR

With a bread in his hand the *kart* blesses the meat before it is sliced and distributed to the participants. He carves a chip from a twig of the linden tree in order to make judgments about the god's favorableness, hits the blade of his knife against the edge of the cauldron in order to expel the evil and to tempt the god, his prophet and the messenger to visit the people. He asks Kugu Jumo to bless them with steel-like hardness, iron-like purity and chase the evil beyond the reach of the iron's sound.

The blessed food is eaten at a short distance from the altar. Kaija Heikkinen has described the communion as follows:

> "The meal began with a dish made from the goose and sheep that had been sacrificed first, and was eaten beside the altar of loaves and candles. This was also offered to us outsiders. Then each family congregated to eat its meal together. Again we were invited to join in. A plastic cloth was spread on the ground and on it were placed a bowl of broth and a bowl of meat, spoons, a few forks, onions and bread. The women came round pouring out drinks. It was not only here that the people all ate from the same bowl, for the same custom was repeated in many villages.[5]

[5] HEIKKINEN 1992: 13–14.

5. THE INSINUATION OF RELIGION IN THE EXPRESSION OF ETHNIC CONSCIOUSNESS

Although the temporal context of the ritual is Christian, the semantic content of the *sürem* is derived from the ethnic belief and value system of the Mari. By organizing the sacrificial feast the rural community recognizes that in the course of the agricultural year there are specific temporal periods that are considered qualitatively different from other periods. The sacrificial ritual is a social representation of that recognition. The *sürem* period that lasts for several days is set apart as sacred time and it is dedicated to actions by which community members can express the hopes and fears that they have in their individual lives and in the larger frame of socio-economic activities. The feast is at the same time a symbolic representation of those hopes and fears and an expression of long suppressed ethnic consciousness as Mari people. The participants in the ritual construct their identity according to markers of ethnicity in which animal sacrifice has traditionally played a visible role. In respect to the Russian population who portray their cultural identity in accordance with their faith as Orthodox Christians, the rural Mari rely on the traditional forms of the folk religion of their ancestors. The animals that are chosen as symbolic vehicles are established markers of values both among the peasant population and among the intellectuals. Sacrificing a sheep, a ram and a goose is a code that the members of rural communities can easily interpret according to their traditions. The sheep is an identity marker by which the membership in the *Ošmarij* communities is expressed, but also a symbolic expression of procreation. The supranormal recipient of the sheep is *Kugu Jumo* or his mother, Mother God of Childbirth. Sacrificing a goose represents health and it is addressed to Mother of the Day.[6]

After the fall of pan-soviet political ideology, the role of religion has become a central issue in Mari ethnicity. Animals continue to have meaning in religious symbolism since the Mari men still believe that all animal categories that have nutritional value are renewable resources, and their religiously motivated killing will increase their number and growth. Latest scholarly literature in the anthropology of sacrifice emphasizes that the idea of the god that ensures renewability of nutritional resources and encourages killing as a sacramental act of sustaining life, reflects conceptual systems of religious groups that are male-dominated. Women, on a general level, are participating in sacrifices mostly as silent onlookers who watch, pray and wait as my colleague Kaija Heikkinen has emphasized. By staying in the margins, women paradoxically take their place in the center of the ritual.[7]

The *sürem* ritual is part of a larger frame of ethnopolitical systems that people are creating as response to their newly gained freedom of self-expression. Nationalism and patriotism are ideologies of identification that have replaced the ideology of socialism.[8]

[6] See HÄMÄLÄINEN 1921: 486–488.

[7] HEIKKINEN 1992: 13.

[8] For a good theory of the ideologies of identification and religious content of ethnicity see JENKINS 1997: 74–87; 107–123.

The ideological 'telos' of socialism has changed from producing equal access to material conditions of life to creating conditions for equal access to spiritual forces of life. There are still more than 350 sacred groves in the Republic of the Mari nowadays. Beside the Udmurts, the Mari are one of the few known people who continue to perform animal sacrifices in present-day Europe. The idea of preserving their primordial forms of religious life has become part of their ethnopolitics. They are representing their ethnic identity as confessional believers of what they call their ancient nature religion. One Mari journalist explained the viability of nature religion by the empirical fact that the Mari have lived for centuries far off the economic and cultural centers. They are a tribe of the forest who have been living in isolation and who continue to pay special attention to the distinction between 'them' and 'foreign' – a trait that characterizes their mentality.[9] The concept of 'nature religion' refers to the tradition of performing rituals out in the open in their sacred groves. But it is also a label which the Mari have adopted to draw a line of demarcation between their way of believing and the Russian way of believing. The symbolic power of the concept has been recognized also among politicians. The government of Mari El has made a resolution to preserve the groves, and just recently it bought a farm outside the capital Joškar-Ola so that even the citypeople can participate in sacrificial rituals.

In 1991 the Mari activists founded an organisation called *Ošmarij-Čimarij Union,* which continues the work of *"Mari ušem"* (the Union of the Mari) that was founded in 1917 in order to oppose conversions to Christianity. Russian Orthodox churches have been built only in regions where the majority of the people are other than Mari.[10] The principal sociocultural factor influencing the survival and renaissance of the ethnic forms of Mari religiosity can be, however, explained both by the structure of economy and by history. More than 65 per cent of the citizens in the Mari republic have earned their living from agriculture and forestry. Their profane values are inseparably connected to their sense of the power-laden places in the landscape of their everyday experience. The sacredness of the *küs-otos* and *keremets* is continuously present as a cognitive framework which influences the ways in which they relate to nature. Taboos that are connected with these places and that prevent people from destroying them remind people of obligations that they have inherited from their ancestors. Their popular religion is written into their landscape and into the ways in which they 'read' its semiotics. The landscape is also cognitively organized in human thinking in its temporality. The places that are set apart as sacred convey the people's historical consciousness. In Mari ethnicity, history has a strong mythological dimension and becomes manifest in the folklore of princes. The most famous of the princes was *Tšumblat* (Čumbylat), who lived in the 11th century and is respected as a national hero who started the tradition of sacrificial rituals. The prince *Tšumblat* is ritually memorized in the beginning of summer in pilgrimages to his grave at the foot of the stony mountain by the river Nemda. Pilgrims bring him corn, dresses and clothes, money, birds, tiny candles and ask for his help. With the sacred groves, keremets

[9] JANALOV 1996.
[10] JANALOV 1996.

and places of pilgrimage the Mari people link themselves both to their territory and to their history. As the meanings of things are disposed to change over time, it is the gods, heroes and ancestors which are kept intact and which guarantee the continuity of traditions.

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SCANDINAVIAN NEO-SHAMANISM

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE ACADEMIC STUDY OF RELIGION IN RECONSTRUCTING BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF TRADITION WITHIN POST-MODERN URBAN MILIEUS

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INTRODUCTION

The title of this symposium: "Old and New Spiritual Movements and Communities in the Folk Religiosity of the 20th Century" (Szeged, Hungary, April 6–9, 1998), provides several conceptual tools for operationalization within an attempt to describe the Scandinavian neo-shamanism of today. To start out, structuring "old" and "new" as strictly opposite factors, distinguishes one of the most interesting patterns in the neo-shamans' efforts to revive,[1] or more accurately, to create a new shamanism out of a forgotten past. One of the main questions, de facto, is: what is new and what is old in contemporary shamanism? How is "new" and "old" mixed and how do the neo-shamans arrive at their assumptions about the content of the "old", or let us say of the traditional, forms of shamanism?

In a book written by Swedish neo-shamans, one of the most influential Scandinavian neo-shamans points out that:

> There is a renaissance in shamanism going on. Shamans from living traditions give their contribution. We must revive our national tradition. We can never revive the old shamanism as it once was, but we must learn from the shamans active today in cultures outside the western modernized countries. I hope that we will create a shamanism for our own culture, climate and geography. There will be problems since the living tradition is once and for all broken. (ERIKSSON 1988: 8–9) [my translation].

According to Mihály Hoppál it is possible to divide the different forms of present shamanisms into two main categories; firstly autochthonous shamanism and secondly neo-shamanism,[2] or as he sometimes puts it: urban shamanism. The first category, tradi-

[1] In my master's thesis (SVANBERG 1994) I used revitalization as a theoretical tool in my attempts to describe neo-shamanism, a perspective which I have gradually abandoned. Revitalization as a theoretical concept is problematic in several ways. In this case, I would like to stress that it is impossible to revitalize Scandinavian shamanism to "what it was", I would rather consider it to be a construction or even innovation since we do not have much knowledge about how seid (seiðr), the Scandinavian shamanism, was put into practice. Moreover, Scandinavian neo-shamanism is also a mixture of different shamanic ideas. It is perhaps more accurate to discuss revitalization among the Saamis, the North American Indians or among some Siberian groups. This last assumption I express with some hesitation.

[2] Previously (HOPPÁL 1992: 197), he has drawn attention to problems and peculiarities in the concept urban shamanism. According to Hoppál it might perhaps sometimes be more accurate to talk about "contemporary" or "postmodern" shamanism.

tional shamanism, is characterized by an inherited or culturally maintained tradition still existent today. In some parts of the world traditional shamanism is threatened by modernism, especially during the Soviet regime in the Siberian areas, where at least the concept shamanism is claimed to have its origin,[3] but where, to quote Hoppál, shamanism was "almost eliminated but escaped at the last minute" (HOPPÁL 1997: 1–2). I will mainly deal with the second category, urban shamanism or neo-shamanism, as I prefer to call the phenomenon. The often controversial (see JORALEM 1990: 105–118 on this discussion) role, in my opinion, played by researchers in the process of resurrecting and preserving "almost eliminated" forms of the so called traditional shamanism is another of my main interests in my study of shamanism.This aspect will, however, not be discussed here.

The title of this conference also contains another important concept, that of "Folk", unfortunately often insufficiently defined and sometimes used in a misleading way. If we understand the term "Folk" as synonymous to ordinary people, in other words, to persons in general who put religion into practise in everyday life, and not only inside the clerically learned doctrine associated with churches, (BRINGÉUS 1994: 6), we suddenly find ourselves facing the background of neo-shamanism: the counter-culture of the late 60s and early 70s. I would like to stress that I do not claim that everyone born in the early 1940s —even if we looked at them as a heterogeneous cohort— entirely reject established forms of praxis and traditional values connected to Christianity and modern Western Christian culture. Nevertheless, it was in America, especially in California, within the groups of baby boomers and among the liberal, flower power generation, where the interest for alternative forms of spirituality, including neo-shamanism, began to grow. The situation in Scandinavia was influenced by that in America. Among neo-shamans as well as among other representatives of alternative life views, we often find an ambivalent attitude towards religion as a traditional institution. This is so, especially in cases where neo-shamans identify the established religion with power holding, hierarchical structures and as a factor closely related to modernity including the idea of man's superiority to nature. Lately, however, the established churches have tried to change their images in order to meet the demands of contemporary human beings: the churches discuss green values, international consciousness, gender issues, to mention but a few. We still find the most influential neo-shamans and ideology formulaters or ideologists outside the established churches or religions. In plain language, they do not engage in mainstream religiosity.

The most influential persons inside neo-shamanism both in Scandinavia and elsewhere are usually well educated. In this respect, they do neither fit in into the "folk" category, nor do they practice shamanism as an everyday religion. Although neo-

[3] Shaman derives from a Tungisian-Siberian word through Russian into Western academic language. According to some researchers, for example Vilmos Diószegi, the famous Hungarian researcher, the origin is šaman, meaning a person who knows, has knowledge. Previously there was a theory that the term could derive from śramana (sanskrit) meaning an ascetic but this has been disproved (ELIADE 1974: 4, 495–496; HEINZE 1991: 8; SIIKALA 1992: 1–2).

shamanic rituals usually take place only during weekends, neo-shamanic ideology, for example belief in the green values, still influences the everyday life of neo-shamans.

The movement concept is also one, which, in a way, could be useful when attempting to characterize neo-shamanism. Ronald L. Grimes defines neo-shamanism as "an individualistic set of images and practices taking shape in the margins of North American culture." In his opinion it would be improper to define neo-shamanism as a sect, a movement, or an ecclesiastical institution (GRIMES 1995: 253). The dilemma with this type of characterization will be an object for further discussion elsewhere. The neo-shamans themselves define their organizational frames and their information channels as "a loosely structured network".

The main purpose of this article is to trace the roots of neo-shamanism and to analyze the role played by the academic study of religion[4] as one source, among many others, taken into account in the construction of shamanism in contemporary Scandinavia. In relation to this field of interest it is necessary to point at, or relate to some corresponding trends in the social contexts of societies where phenomena like neo-shamanism occur.

For my purposes, I define Scandinavia as Sweden, Norway and Denmark in this article. I will mainly concentrate on Yggdrasil which, principally, is a Swedish network. Yggdrasil stands for the world tree in Scandinavian mythology. My focus on Yggdrasil has to do with the fact that my key informants are among those who started this network, in 1982. Earlier, in 1976 the same persons began to publish a magazine called Gimle.

There are of course neo-shamanic groups in Finland, too, belonging to the same stream as the urban shamanism represented, especially, in Sweden. The similarities are mainly due to the impact of Michael Harner and his core-shamanism which I will come back to later on. Since I do not have much empirical data on the Finnish groups and since they differ from the Scandinavian network —group—, in several respects,[5] I unfortunately have to leave them out in this context.[6]

THE CALIFORNIAN BACKGROUND

As has been the case with so many other religious ideas expressed and established in the Western world during the late 60s and 70s, the first impulses with reference to neo-shamanism are to be found in the Californian melting pot. It is quite clear that the first

[4] *Religionswissenschaft* in German, *religionsvetenskap* in Swedish. The term in English more often is comparative religion, religious studies or history of religions.

[5] Differences in languages and different cultural heritages could be the two main reasons why neo-shamans in the Nordic countries have not established a common coordinated network. The Finnish neo-shamans seem to have their own contact channels directly to Michael Harner and his organization.

[6] Some seminar papers (Poutiainen Marja 1992 Uskontotieteen proseminaariesitelmä Turun yliopisto; Hänninen Kirsi 1997: Uushamanismi Turussa Turun yliopisto Kulttuurien tutkimuksen laitos Turku-ryhmän harjoitustyö) on Finnish neo-shamanic groups, which I have read characterize them as very much influenced by ideas and methods stemming from Michael Harner. It would not be surprising to find that during the past few years they might have gone through similar changes as the Scandinavian group. Generally speaking the tendency displays a development from romanticization of North American Indians, to Harner's core shamanism and into an idealization of a national heritage of their own.

interests in shamanism coincide with the time when Carlos Castaneda's books attained huge popularity. Carlos Castaneda's first book about his meetings with the sorcerer Don Juan Matus, a Yaqui Indian whom no one else has met, was published in 1968. In the beginning the readers were mostly students and intellectuals but the book *The Teachings of Don Juan. A Yaqui Way of Knowledge* and the following books were eagerly read also in the counter-culture and "hippie movement". It is worth noting that Castaneda never uses the word "shaman" when he describes Don Juan. He uses the term *brujo*, Spanish for medicine-man, sorcerer or black-magician. In an interview, Mikael Gejel, for many years editor-in-chief of Gimle, implies that his personal interest in this field began as he read the books written by Castaneda. This was probably true for many other neo-shamans. At the same time the nostalgic interest in Native American traditions began to grow also in Scandinavia. The nostalgic concerns for Native Americans expressed by the Flower Power generation in the US can partly be understood as a reaction against and a criticism of the governmental policy and earlier suppression of Native Americans.

However, it was Michael Harner, a former anthropologist, who made shamanic techniques popular among common people. He decided to mix knowledge derived from his field work experiences with descriptions of shamanisms from all over the world in order to express an inside perspective of shamanism. This "core" shamanism, a concept developed by Harner, consists of the elementary practical forms from within several classic shamanic cultures. This mixture of both practices and ideologies is adjusted to modern society, thus making shamanism available to urban people. According to Harner and other neo-shamans it should be possible for almost anyone to practise shamanism. (HARNER 1989: 14; HORWITZ 1993: 47–48)

THE SCANDINAVIAN NETWORK

Harner's conglomerated, universalistic kind of shamanism was an attractive perspective also to the Swedish concentrated network called Yggdrasil. The name "Yggdrasil" reveals that already since its foundation the network has been connected to old Norse tradition. It was founded as a result of impulses from the New Age center, the bookshop Vattumannen (Aquarius; eng. transl.). However, during the first years of its existence, Yggdrasil paid more attention to the North American Indians and to a kind of romanticization of their traditions.

In 1994 I analysed the content of Gimle, the magazine of the neo-shamans (Gimle meaning the new heaven after Ragnarök, the end of the world in Scandinavian mythology). In the process I noted that it was possible to distinguish three different periods in the magazine's existence. Gimle has been published, irregularly, in 21 issues between the years 1976 and 1993. After 1993 four issues have been published. Obvious enough, in an analysis of this kind, mainly the views of the active writers, that is the ideas of the prominent figures of neo-shamanism are represented.

The first issues appearing in the mid and late 70s contained many articles about ecological matters. Still today, there is no clear stipulation in the circles around Gimle for a definition of the shamanic interest. I prefer to call the period covering the first four

issues "the introductory period". In the following issues, 5–16, a clear conflict —and often a very inflamed debate— is displayed whether the neo-shamans in Scandinavia should try to rebuild their own traditions with assistance from North-American Indians, or rely on the Scandinavian traditions. Even though the neo-shamans are very open to foreign cultural influences, since, in their opinion, one can learn something from almost anything, they decided to build their activity on geographically nearby heritage.[7] Yggdrasil's leading writers conceded that the old Norse tradition was the most important source.This second period is a formative period. The third period, referring to the issues 17–21 of Gimle, is characterized by stability. The Norse tradition is accepted among most of the contributing writers.

The connections to Saami (Lapp) religion are also evident, but the mythology within Scandinavian neo-shamanism is more oriented towards the old Norse, the pre-Christian religion and the seid tradition, than to Saami tradition. The authoritative source among neo-shamans on seid is a dissertation from 1935 by the Swedish researcher Dag Strömbäck, the title of which is: Sejd. textstudier i nordisk religionshistoria (Seid. Studies in the texts of Nordic history of religion: Eng. transl.). The Scandinavian groups clearly have an interest in Saami mythology but their interest is focused on the similarity of shamanic methods rather than on mythology as such.

When I interviewed Mikael Gejel, one of the most influential persons in the Scandinavian network Yggdrasil, he stressed that it is mostly women, (approximately 70–80 per cent), who participate in neo-shamanic rituals. However, when it comes to writing in their magazine Gimle there is a clear male predominance (IF mgt 1995/144–149 R).

According to results from a questionnaire used in Sweden, the average age of people engaged in New Age phenomena is 42 years and more than 80 per cent of these interested persons are women. As mentioned above, they are usually highly educated, almost half of the population group had a university degree or had taken courses at university level (FRISK 1997: 33).

The neo-shamans, as well as the largest group of New Age adherents belong to the postwar generation in America called the "baby boomers". Characteristically, these people are in a stage of life were they engage in constructing a personal form of spirituality, in the process collecting inspiration from a variety of sources, often very disparate.

THE ACADEMIC CONNECTIONS

As I said already, neo-shamans use previous research on shamanism and they do this in several ways. First of all, descriptions of shamanic phenomena from all over the world are seen to legitimize the importance of the engagement. One notion often pointed out by

[7] One important reason why the Scandinavian neo-shamans distanced themselves from the romanticization of North-American Indian traditions was a conflict between Native Americans and popularizers (read commercializers) of the indigenous heritage. Some elders in the Indian tribes felt that they had been betrayed because their traditions had been exploited. This resulted in a black list, which included some persons who until then had held workshops in shamanism also in Sweden. (Gimle nr. 12–13) This open conflict did partly "accentuate" the decision of the neo-shamans to aim at a shamanism based on their own cultural heritage.

neo-shamans is that, since researchers have found evidence of shamanism in so many geographically different areas, shamanism "must work". According to neo-shamans shamanism is unquestionably one of the oldest and most genuine forms of religious phenomena on earth.

One of the most vital sources stimulating the neo-shamans in their efforts to reconstruct shamanism in Western urban societies was and is the academic study of traditional shamanism. Here we immediately find a big difference between the two kinds of shamanisms. The difference is that neo-shamanism is a textually dependent phenomenon, it is not transmitted through oral tradition. Besides trying to reconstruct "the old shamanism as it was" by learning from shamans who are active today in cultures outside the western modernized countries, today's shamans have to use "the book". The most important work is Mircea Eliade's *Shamanism. Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, first published in French 1951.[8] This large work, covering more than 600 pages, is available in almost every New Age book shop. I think the main reason for this great influence can be related to Eliade's understanding of the holy as something divine, that manifests itself in the human sphere, in a "sui generis manner" in other words, it is thought that 'the holy' is not a psychologically or socially based phenomenon. But Armin W. Geertz has noted that:

> "Finally, it is time that historians of religions depart from deeply ingrained prejudices against the social sciences. Sometimes historians of religions have had a greater distaste of sociology and ethnography than of theology! You will find it with European historians of religions like Ugo Bianchi and you will find it with American historians like Mircea Eliade. Like Eliade, I too am dissatisfied with producing empirical building blocks while others do the building. Eliade choose to solve the problem by making *sui generis* claims about religion in order to justify the autonomy of the discipline without recourse to a dialogue with, in Eliade's words, such 'reductionistic disciplines' as ethnography, sociology, and psychology" (GEERTZ 1995: 35).

According to Eliade, the similarities between the religions, which are a major and often emphasized theme among neo-shamans, are based on an actual holy sphere, more or less independent of human and social conditions. In neo-shaman writings and practices one can see the attraction of the universalistic shamanism presented by Eliade in his collection of descriptions of different forms of shamanism. Oddrun Marie Hovde, a Norwegian author also clearly points out that Eliade describes traditional shamanism as a monolithic phenomenon, even though various versions of shamanism existed in many different areas isolated from each other. This idea of a comprehensive and common phenomenon is attractive to modern neo-shamans. (HOVDE 1997: 4) The search, or as I would call it, the nostalgic hunt for values of the past expressed in Eliade's writings, is obvious and appeal to neo-shamans. The fascination for Eliade's positive and sympathetic understanding of shamanism, and the interest in Eliade among neo-shamans are clearly illustrated by one special theme; namely Eliade's perspective on the psychological state of shamans. According to Eliade, the gift of shamanizing involves the solution of a psychic crisis which occurs when the person is in the process of being called to be-

[8] Le chamanisme et les techniques archaïques de l'extase by Librairie Payot, Paris.

come a shaman. This is interesting because Eliade stresses the positive effects of such a crisis. I understand this, partly, as a reaction against previous research. Typical for post-war scholars is their effort to avoid a pejorative tone in describing religious phenomena. One good example of this is the state of mind in which the shaman works. The perspective considering him has changed from seeing him as a tool of the devil, to the idea of him being possessed by malign spirits, the object of arctic hysteria, to seeing the behaviour as ecstasy (historians of religions) and trance (more used by behavioural scientists), to naming the state an ASC (Alternative or Alternate State of Consciousness) condition. The latest trend is to talk about SSC (Shamanic State of Consciousness, introduced by Michael Harner). In this development there is a strong tendency of showing the efforts to bridge the gap between the researcher and the studied object.

Åke Hultkrantz, an expert on North American Indians and their religions, now professor emeritus, from Stockholm University has inspired many of the founders of neo-shamanism in Sweden. His lectures gained a lot of attention. He himself —as well as his successor Louise Bäckman— are often mentioned as authorities inside the neo-shamanic circles. This shows the wish to legitimate shamanic activities by referring to academics and to academic studies of shamanism.

Jonathan Horwitz, a close friend and disciple of Michael Harner, founded a Scandinavian Center for Shamanic studies in Copenhagen. The Danish network established by Horwitz and Annette Høst has been studied by HOVDE (1994). As a central figure in the Danish network for neo-shamanism Horwitz practises and teaches the same methods as Michael Harner. In 1991 he also participated in the symposium on religious rites held in Åbo/Turku, Finland. There he emphasized the importance of participant observation and the emic perspective in order to "understand" what is going on in a shamanic ritual. He critizes the academic distance and stresses the necessity of being "aware of the presence of power" (HORWITZ 1993: 42).

The close relation to the academic milieu is also evident elsewhere than in the Scandinavian countries. In the city of Turku/Åbo some students at the University of Turku have arranged a group focusing on shamanism as their special interest. (see footnote 6). A few years ago it was also popular among psychology students at Åbo Akademi University to participate in shamanic rituals. Even in Estonia, University of Tartu, there is a student group which tries to revive Finno-Ugric traditions and which practises shamanic rituals. They have a journal of their own, too, called "Hiis" (sacred wood). The Polish researcher Piotr Wiench notices the close connections between the environmental movements and the Neo-Pagan groups, as he calls them. He stresses the quest for national identity as one answer to the question of why these groups are now entering the scene in former Soviet dominated countries. (WIENCH 1997: 283–292) Shaping identity and the close connection to the revival of animistic religion in the Mari El Republic is a subject discussed by Svetlana Tchervonnaya in the same volume (book). (TCHERVONNAYA 1997: 369–377). In my studies of Yggdrasil and Gimle I, for my part, also noted that some of the groups appearing within this framework were very extreme. The old Scandinavian mythology is used in activities which often seem very nationalistic, even racist. The founders and principal figures of Yggdrasil clearly dissociate themselves from these groups.

In a rather humorous article in Anthropology Today, Roy Willis writes about how neo-shamanism entered the Edinburgh University by means of a course arranged by the Centre for Continuing Education. In Willis's opinion neo-shamanism provides an opportunity for people to create connections to their cultural roots, i. e. to conditions and values which existed before Christianity and the modern institutions. This need of connection and belongingness is accentuated in a world of rapid changes. Another reason for the widespread popularity of shamanism is the increasing interest in ecological studies. In this case neo-shamanism provides an idea that all forms of life are inter-connected and dependent of each other. A third reason why shamanism is so popular among students is that the praxis and methods used in neo-shamanism offer a way to engage in intensive experiences and to reach hidden knowledge. These methods, according to Willis, are highly resemblant to those of scientific research.[9] (WILLIS 1994: 16–18).

CONCLUSIONS

POSTMODERNITY AND NEO-SHAMANISM

The current discussion about the meaning of terms such as postmodernism and postmodernity is extensive and problematic and cannot be brought to an end in this article. Pertti J. Anttonen scrutinizes the relation between modernism and postmodernism in an article and here he makes a note of several important distinctions. He, says, for example: "Since 'postmodernism' is intrinsically a critique of the 'modern', the question of what is postmodern depends on what is counted as modern." (ANTTONEN 1993: 17–33) The critique and calling in question of various modern aspects of the society is one neo-shamanic characteristic. With this determination in mind I think *postmodernity* can illustrate what is important to neo-shamanism. At least, the concept of postmodernity can function as a tool to operationalize a study intended to illuminate the appearance of neo-shamanism in contemporary society. Neo-shamans in general and Michael Harner —as the most influential among them— in particular, mix elements from several traditions. The strivings result in a synthesis where at least something is new: i.e. neo-shamanism. The principle guiding this process of blending has to do with the need to create a meaningful life in present day conditions.

> The word postmodernism generally refers to a form of contemporary culture, whereas the term postmodernity alludes to a specific historical period. Postmodernity is a style of thought which is suspicious of classical notions of truth, reason, identity and objectivity, of the idea of universal progress or emancipation, of single frameworks, grand narratives or ultimate grounds of explanation (EAGLETON 1996: vii).

It would not be unfair to call the neo-shamans advocates of multicultural ideals. In saying so we have of course to bear in mind that the neo-shamanism studied is a product of large-scale industrial cultures. Despite the strong emphasis on pre-Christian religion and culture in Scandinavia there is a deeply embedded notion that non-Western cultures

[9] I am not sure if this last statement should be understood as a joke or not.

are supposed to be healthier, happier and more humane than the cultures in the West. This notion has also been called "Third Worldism" (BERGER 1992: 66). Non-Western societies are presumed to be ecological, closer to nature, more democratic and so on. From an observation point of view it is not far fetched to characterize the neo-shamans as multiculturally oriented romanticists nostalgic for a long gone past.

In postmodernity, including its notion that we have lost "the Great Narratives" there still exist the religious, existential, spiritual needs of the individual. One common characteristic of post-modern society is the emphasis on individual choice in order to gratify essential human needs. Even Christianity has become a choice. There are many opinions about secularization and what the concept stands for. Peter Berger, on his part is convinced that "the modern age has indeed been the scene of massive secularization." In Berger's opinion, the counter-secularization has also grown to become an important source of power in the modern secularized world. In addition to traditional religions and their attraction we can also find non-traditional forms appearing, for example, in the counter culture —forms which to Berger— might not at first look religious at all (BERGER 1992: 29).

As a result of life in a multicultural society the possibility of mixing codes has arisen. The baby boomers use this method, which is sometimes illustrated as "picking from a store", in Swedish we say "smörgåsbord", to eclectially and creatively construct a personal spirituality. Some popular themes in the counter-culture of the late 60s and early 70s in America have continued within New Age. The intent of those who engage themselves in New Age ideas and practices is an effort to get acquainted with several forms of spirituality. Thus, in their view it is possible to construct a spirituality of one's own, by mixing a great variety of sources, one of which can be Native American spirituality. (ROOF, CARROL and ROOZEN 1995: 248–251). In the course of time a constructed Native Scandinavian spirituality has become a meaningful reality to the members of Yggdrasil. Neo-shamanism is similar to New Age in some other ways, too. For example, they have in common, the insight of the loss of culture, spirituality and myths essential to them in a creative way of life.

From an American perspective it has been pointed out —I quote: "A final characteristic of the post-war generation's spirituality is that it is generally anti-institutional and antihierarchical. This should not be surprising when one considers the countercultural emphases of the late 60s and early 70s when the majority of this generation came to maturity" (ROOF, CARROLL and ROOZEN 1995: 252).

Neo-shamanism can eventually be understood as one expression, among others, of popular Western-culture criticism directed against the reductionism and the dualism considered as typical of rationalist philosophy, science in a strict sense and "dogmatic Christianity". These are the main factors which neo-shamans claim to be responsible for the crisis in the post-modern world.

The forms of neo-shamanism occurring since the early 70s can be understood as a protest against the physical view of the world, but also as a reaction against science (natural sciences) and advanced technology. Paradoxically, the neo-shamans themselves use computers and are well represented on Internet. There are even neo-shamanic subcategories as techno-shamanism and cyber-shamanism.

Let me conclude with some general assumptions which orient my views:

1) Research in neo-shamanism should try to analyze and interpret what this "movement" positively wishes to attain and establish, as well as what the "movement" is against.

2) Research should try to be attentive both to the inner perspective and to the comparative description of neo-shamanism.

3) In the process of research into such a complex phenomenon, many terms and concepts need to be analyzed and formulated in accordance with a broad perspective on human life. Concepts like counter-culture, baby boomers, secularization must be defined, at least in the sense that the individual researcher should try to be clear about his own concepts. Misconceptions must be resolved; onesided, predetermined arguments must remain open to discussion and to real communication among scholars.

4) Research demands an open attitude. However, it also demands formulated descriptions, methods and interpretations. Only this way can the discussion go on, and hopefully lead to deeper understanding.

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SOME REMARKS ON THE CULT OF THE DEAD IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA: AFTERLIFE IN "SCRIPTURAL" AND POPULAR HINDUISM

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As other world religions, Hinduism has its popular and intellectual manifestations. The latter could be denoted "textual" or "scriptural" Hinduism as it is based on the old literary tradition in Sanskrit which is carried by the learned brahmins who are also the specialists of rituals and take care of the cult in temples. This paper discusses some aspects of the Hinduism of villages which are compared with the "scriptural" doctrines. In January and Ferbruary 1998 I visited South and Central India: the Tulu-speaking district of coastal Karnataka and some tribal villages of the Bhils in the Jhabua district of Madhya Pradesh. The paper is inspired by these fieldwork experiences and its aim is to give a theoretical frame to some observances of the religious communities whom I met, to interpret some aspects of living Hinduism on the basis of book lore that had been the only available source of information for me until this trip.[1] The conclusions of this article cannot be very farreaching, it is a preliminary discussion of a topic that needs more elaborate research.

MODALITIES OF AFTERLIFE IN HINDUISM

Hinduism is based on the pluralism of ideas which is manifested in the variety of philosphical schools, multitude of gods, different ways towards the final liberation (*karmamārga*, *bhaktimārga*, *jñanamārga*). Concepts of life after death have been diverse as well, contradictions within the doctrines approved by the sacred texts are noticeable. The varieties of the post-mortal existence of human beings are immense in religious thinking all over the world (see VAN BAAREN 1974). However, the diversity of beliefs in afterlife within the traditions of Hinduism is striking compared to the striving for coherence in other world religions. Nirad Chaudhuri has written abouth the Hindus that they "have been happy with wholly inconsistent views about what happens after death, and they will express any view which suits them in the context of an argument" (CHAUDHURI

[1] I am grateful to Dr. Martti Junnonaho for invitng me to the village of Belma in Coastal Karnataka and to Dr. Swaminathan Lourdusamy for arranging my trip to the Bhil villages of Jhabua district in Madhya Pradesh. I would also like to thank Prof. Asko Parpola for his valuable comments. My trip to India was supported by the Estonian Science Foundation.

1997: 152). Proceeding from N. Chaudhuri's observations I will mention the most remarkable among those ideas illustrated by the postulates of Sanskrit texts.

1) Few human beings achieve *mokṣa* which is a transcendental state beyond the earthly sufferings and a liberation from the cycle of birth, death and rebirths. *Mokṣa* can be attained by the grace of God but generally it requires great efforts and is not attainable by everyone: "A man who has gone from one stage of life to another, made the offerings into the fire, conquered his sensory powers, exhausted himself by giving alms and propitiatory offerings, and then lived as a wandering ascetic – when he has died, he thrives. When a man has paid his three debts, he may set his mind-and-heart on Freedom (*mokṣa*); but if he seeks Freedom when he has not paid the debts, he sinks down." (*Manusmṛti* 6, 34–35. The debts are owed to the great sages, the ancestors and the gods; "sinks down" probably means falls into hell.)

2) Some philosophical schools (*cārvakas*) have held the materialist point of view and denied the reality of life after death: "There is no heaven, no final liberation, nor any soul in another world. (---) When once the body becomes ashes how can it ever return again? If he who departs from the body goes to another world, how is it that he comes not back again, restless for love of his kindred? Hence it is only as a means of livelihood that Brahmins have established here all these ceremonies for the dead, – there is no other fruit anywhere." (*Sarva-darśana-saṃgraha* of Mādhava; RENOU 1967: 171).

3) There is an archaic idea reflected already in *Rigveda* that the dead live in the world of *pitriloka* (world of the fathers, i.e. the ancestors). This concept is connected with the memorial offerings of food and water to the dead (*śrāddha-yajña*) and through the continuation of this traditional ritual the idea of *pitriloka* has survived in popular religion (LOURDUSAMY–SAHAY 1996). According to *Rigveda* the abode where the fathers dwell is situated in the highest heaven (10, 14), in the midst of the sky (10, 15), near the highest point of the sun (9, 113). In the Vedic and Brahmanic texts stars are said to be the lights of virtuous men who go to the heavenly world (MACDONELL 1995: 167).

4) The belief in the heavenly existence of the fathers later led to the concepts of paradise and hell, two opposites in the dualistic modelling of the afterlife. In *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* Naciketas speaks to Yama, the lord of the dead, and describes the world of heaven as follows: "There is no fear whatever; thou [Yama] art not there, nor does one fear old age. Crossing over both hunger and thirst, leaving sorrow behind, one rejoices in the world of heaven." (I. 1,2) Yama later addresses him: "Whatever desires are hard to attain in this world of mortals, ask for all those desires at thy will. Here are noble maidens with chariots and musical instruments: the like of them cannot be won by men. Be served by these whom I give to thee." (I. 1,25).

Hope for such blissful afterlife is counterbalanced by the possibility of the miserable existence in hell which is associated with the sufferings in this world. *Manusmṛti* prescribes topics of meditation for the ascetic: "He should think about where men go as a result of the effects of their past actions and about how they fall into hell and are tortured in the house of Yama; and about how they are separated from the people they like and united with the people they dislike, and are overcome by old age and tormented by diseases" (6, 61–62).

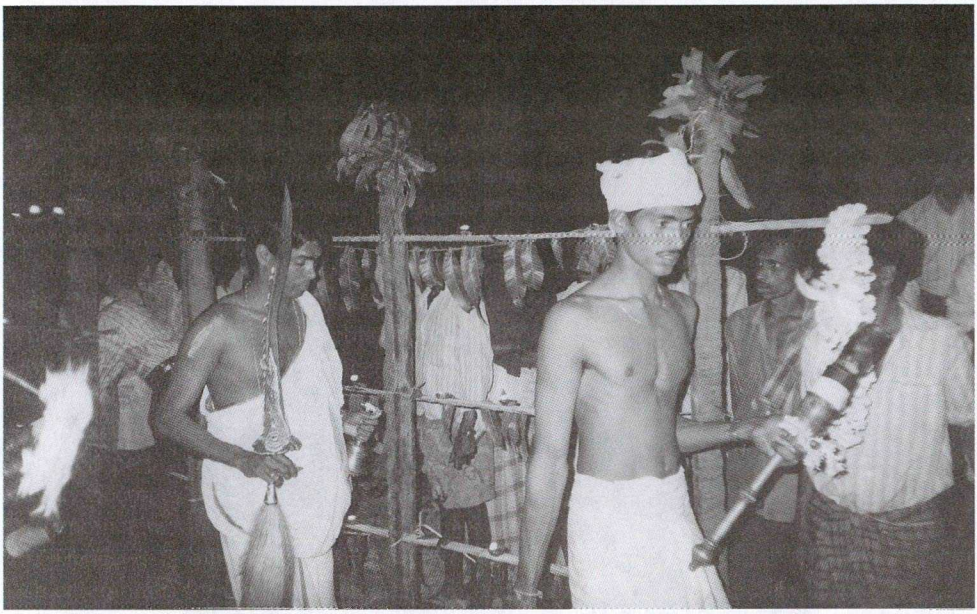

Fig. 1. Night procession towards the field temple is a part of the *bhuuta* ceremony: brahmin Gopala Krishna with the ritual sword. Belma village, Coastal Karnataka. Jan. 26, 1998.

Fig. 2. Medium Venkappa Ajari walks in the possession holding the ritual sword, bell and covered with flower garlands. Belma village, Coastal Karnataka. Jan. 26, 1998.

Fig. 3. Medium Venkappa Ajari in the state of possession walking towards the field temple and ringing the bell Belma village, Coastal Karnataka. Jan. 26, 1998.

5) According to folk beliefs known all over India some persons become evil ghosts (*bhūtas* and *pretas*) after their death. *Manusmṛti* prescribes five great sacrifices to the householder to do every day: "The study (of the Veda) is the sacrifice to ultimate reality, and the refreshing libation is the sacrifice to the ancestors; the offering into the fire is for the gods, the propitiatory offering of portions of food is for the disembodied spirits (*bhūtas*), and the revering of guests is the sacrifice to men." (3, 70) Here ancestors and *bhūtas* make up two distinct groups.

In Indian folk religion mainly people who die violent death and for whom *śrāddha* is not performed become these malevolent ghosts who haunt at night (BASHAM 1959, 318). Christopher J. FULLER characterises them as being in a state of limbo, half in this

Fig. 4. A scene of the ceremony in the field temple. On the right hand of the medium: Sanjiva Rai, the main organizer of the ceremony. Belma village, Coastal Karnataka. Jan. 26, 1998.

Fig. 5. Memorial stones of the ancestors of the Bhils. Bhagor village, Jhabua district, Madhya Pradesh. February, 1998.

Fig. 6. A sacrificial place of the Bhils. Bhagor village, Jhabua district, Madhya Pradesh. February, 1998.

world, where they wilfully harm the living. They cause physical and mental illness, childlessness, sometimes death (FULLER 1992: 227).

6) One of the fundamental doctrines of Hinduism is the belief in rebirth which is textually attested since the oldest upanishads. The deeds of the previous life determine the quality of the next embodiment: "A man becomes a stationary object as a result of the faults that are the effects of past actions of the body, a bird or wild animal from those of speech, and a member of one of the lowest castes from those of the mind-and-heart." (*Manusmṛti* 12, 9). The belief in rebirth is approved by the most venerated religious scriptures as *Bhagavadgītā*: "Just as a person casts off worn-out garments and puts on others that are new, even so does the soul cast off worn-out bodies and take on others that are new" (2, 22; RENOU 1967: 111).

The first concept – *mokṣa* as an immediate aim – is important for the religious aspirers and learned minority of the society. Most of the people have postponed it to the next lives. The atheistic scepticism has never gained popularity in India. The idea of *pitriloka* is nowadays reflected in rituals; as a living belief it is somewhat overshadowed by vivid imaginations of heaven and hell. The fear of the demonic dead is essential in popular religion; belief in rebirth is a distinctive feature of Hinduism which is shared both by the learned people and illiterate village folk. A somewhat surprising discordance with the last dominating view is the popular belief in the divine ancestors who constantly influence the well-being of the living and who stay in this world instead of passing on to the transcendental *pitriloka*. Both in South and Central India I saw village communities for

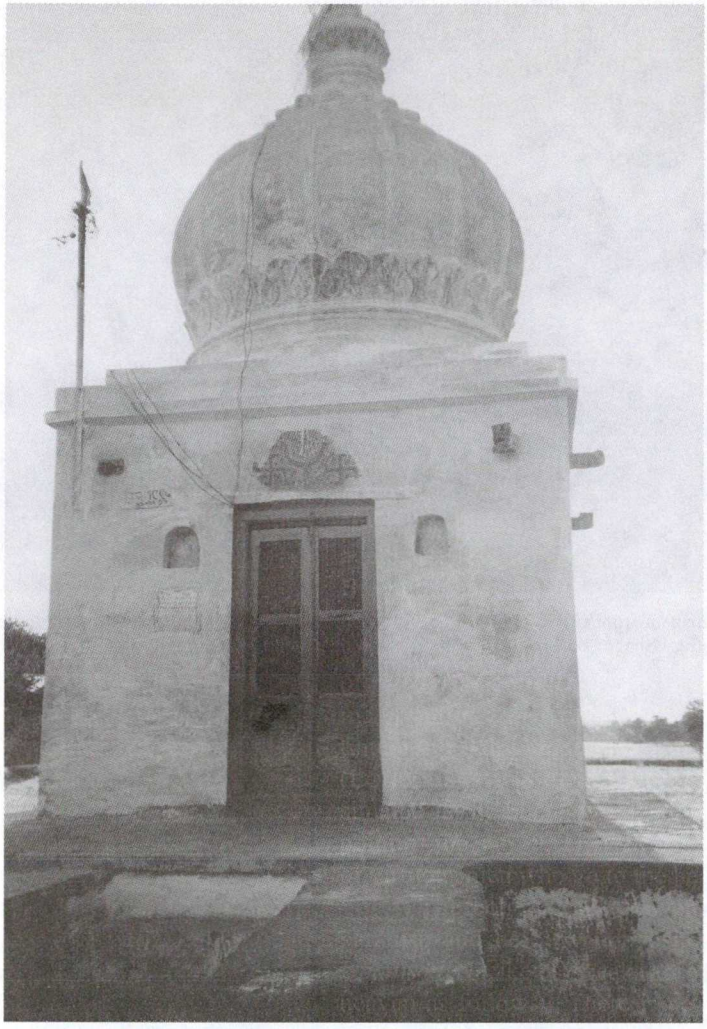

Fig. 7. A village temple in Bhagor, Jhabua district, Madhya Pradesh. February, 1998.

whom the relationship with the ancestors is of vital importance. They can bless and punish and intervene in the life of human beings. The ancestors can become physically present when they temporarily incarnate in mediums and actors during complex rituals involving possession.

Fig. 8. A Bhil man in front of the altar of the village temple. Stones represent different deities, trident is an attribute of Shiva. Bhagor village, Jhabua district, Madhya Pradesh. February, 1998. (Photos by the author)

ANCESTORS IN THE FOLK RELIGION OF CONTEMPORARY INDIA: SOME EXAMPLES

Coastal Karnataka is one of the old districts of Dravidian culture which is inhabited by 2.5 million people the majority of whom speak Tulu. Kannada has been the language of administration and education of the region, wherefore Tulu has never gained much importance as a literary language. The vitality of traditional folk culture of Coastal Karnataka is amazing: it includes folk theatre (*yakshagaana*) classical genres of folklore (e. g. epical songs *paaddanas*), old Dravidian cults as the worship of serpents (*naagas*). These and many other traditions are alive and will be certainly passed on to the 21st century without the danger of becoming extinct or marginal.

In South India the most important rituals of the villages are the annual festivals of tutelary deities (FULLER 1992: 129). In Coastal Karnataka and North Kerala village communities worship local deities called *bhuutas* (Sanskrit *bhūta*). This cult is practiced in some other parts of India and in Sri Lanka but in Coastal Karnataka it has preserved in its most complex and traditional form: it includes music, songs, dances, elements of folk theatre, processions, rituals, offerings, possession, prophecies and magical healing. The village festival dedicated to *bhuutas* lasts for several days and nights, all the castes are represented in organizing the ceremony both in the distribution of work and ritual roles of the participants (see UPADHYAYA 1996).

As we saw, in many parts of India *bhūtas* can be interpreted as the demonic dead who do not pass to the next birth but stay in this world to do harm to the living. The Sanskrit word *bhūta* is *participium perfecti passivi* of the verb *bhū* ('to be, exist'). Hence it denotes the dead beings, those who lived in the past. In sacred texts they are characterised as low in religious scale: according to *Mahābhārata* the men of purest soul worship gods; those of middle sort (passionate) worship *yakṣas* and *rākṣasas*; those of the lowest sort, whose souls are in darkness, worship *pretas* and bands of *bhūtas* (6, 41, 4 – HOPKINS 1969: 30). While *yakṣas* are usually regarded as benevolent in Indian mythology, *rākṣasas* often have demonic features. Thus *pretas* and *bhūtas* are here qualified as the lowest in rank, they are demons *par excellence*. These two classes are often associated with the evil *piśācas*, "wanderers by night". They all dance together on battle fields and in burial grounds. (HOPKINS 1969: 30–31). According to the genealogy of *Harivaṃsa* and *Vāyu Purāṇa* the mother of *bhūtas* is *Krodhā* (Anger). In *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* they are characterized as "fierce beings and eaters of flesh" who were created by Creator when he was incensed. But *bhūtas* are also attendants of Shiva who is held to be their lord (*Bhūteśvara*, *Bhūteśa*) which somewhat elevates their rank in mythological hierarchy. (GONDA 1960: 323; DOWSON 1992: 55-56).

Such religious background and the superior point of view of the Christian missionaries explains why the *bhuuta* cult of Coastal Karnataka has been interpreted as 'devil worship'. Fierce possession, colourful masks and blood sacrifices as well as the whole atmosphere of the ritual can leave an impression of the demonic cult on the outsiders but for the worshippers *bhuutas* are benevolent, tutelary spirits who protect certain families, villages or regions. U. P. Upadhyaya has classified *bhuutas* into four basic categories: 1) spirits with totemistic origin; 2) puranic deities of Hindu pantheon like the attendants of Shiva or Mother Goddess; 3) heroes who perished for some noble cause; 4) ferocious spirits of diverse origin (like human beings who met tragic death). (UPADHYAYA 1996: 201–202). The last group corresponds to *bhūtas* as the demonic dead in other parts of India. Just like in human society there is a hierarchy among the spirits. *Bermeru* is a supreme *bhuuta*, next come the royal spirits *Koḍamantaaya*, *Jaarandaaya* and others. Departed heroes like *Kooṭi-Cennaya* and *Kalkuḍa* stand next in hierarchy, followed by ferocious spirits like *Guliga*, *Cauṇḍi* and *Niica*. (UPADHYAYA 1996: 205). According to the oral information of Ashoka Alva, a folklorist from Udupi, more than 400 *bhuutas* have been known in Dakshina Kannada. My fieldwork experience and conversations with the tradition bearers convinced me that to a great extent the *bhuutas* are divine ancestors and heroes who are worshipped on the family and village community level.

The village of Belma is situated at a distance of about 20 kilometres from Mangalore city. It is inhabited by a few thousand people, both Muslims and Hindus. Only the latter participate in the religious ceremony which is annually held on January 24–27 and is dedicated to the *bhuutas* of the village. There are nine houses of landowners (Bunts) in Belma village and they are responsible for the arrangements. The main organiser of the ceremony is Sanjiva Rai, the master of Barike house where the small shrine (*gudi*) of *bhuutas* is situated. In January 1998 he was already 79 years old and thinking about a possible successor who would take over the responsibility from him. Two *bhuutas* live in Barike house: *Panjustnaaya* is the royal one, *Posa bhuuta* is his minister and thus

lower in rank. Sanjiva Rai told the following legend about the origin of the cult in his home: a long time ago *Panjustnaaya bhuuta* flew in the form of a white cock on the roof of the house, he looked around and declared to the master: "I will not leave this place, you will make a double bed for me and you. You will be my family and everything here belongs to me. The remnants of food and anything else are my property." He is the "captain" who took his assistant *Posa bhuuta* with him. The third *bhuuta* of Barike house is *Bermeru* who lives in a shrine which is about half a kilometre away. He is worshipped once a year during a special ceremony.

On the late evening of January 24 the musicians, other participants of the ritual and many people of the village gather in the yard of Barike house. The ritual begins with music and *puja* offering within the shrine. Sanjiva Rai says the secret words known only to him and the spirit enters the body of the medium Venkappa Ajari who gets possessed. Around midnight the procession leads to the temple in the field which is erected on the day before the ceremony and covered with palm leaves. Venkappa Ajari is the local man who belongs to the caste of carpenters whose role during the ceremony is extremely hard both psychologically and physically. As a *patri* he offers his body for the temporary incarnation of *bhuutas*. In the state of possession the *bhuuta* speaks through him and a part of his message to the village people is ferocious: "You live in my land, I have given all my land to you, you eat my rice but you do not worship me enough, you have forgotten me!" Thus the ceremony including prayers and offerings to *bhuutas* has some propitiatory functions. However, the ceremony is not only a religious event but also a social gathering of the village community who discuss their problems and get advice and orders form the deity as the highest authority.

M. Gopala Krishna is a young brahmin (*tantri*) from the neighbouring Munnur village who has another leading role in the ceremony. He carries through the *pūjā* offerings and follows the complex ritual as a supervisor which is the traditional role of brahmanic priests since the Vedic period. There are rituals which cannot be performed by other members of the community. (Also other ritual roles are hereditary and attached to certain castes.) The obligatory presence of the brahmin can be interpreted as the approval of the cult of *bhuutas* as local village deities from the point of view of "high" Aryan religion. It is not easy to explain the status of Dravidian *bhuutas* on the basis of the "scriptural" belief system of Hinduism concerning the modalities of afterlife. The hundreds of local *bhuutas* of Coastal Karnataka do not make up a homogeneous group but it is clear that some of them are ancestors, beings of the past in the true meaning of the Sanskrit word. They are distinct from the Hindu gods worshipped in temples and from the transcendental fathers to whom *śrāddha* offerings are brought. (For a more detailed survey of *bhuuta* rituals and their meaning see UPADHYAYA 1996, GOWDA 1996, JUNNONAHO 1996.)

Bhils are an indigenous tribal people in central India who live on a large territory in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Their original non-Indo-European language has become extinct but nowadays they speak a Gujarati dialect, their culture and religion has been influenced by Hinduism. However, in the villages of Jhabua district I visited this influence has been relatively weak. Bhils worship the supereme god Bhagwan who is never represented in stone or wood and many other deities who have such representations, mainly in crude stones. Gods are either sanguine or clean, i. e. they either

welcome bloody sacrifices or dislike them. Most of them belong to the former group just like all the goddesses (*mata* 'mother'). (KOPPERS–JUNGBLUT 1976: I, 205–206).

Bhils burn their dead and later erect colourful stone slabs as memorials for them. Not everybody is venerated in such a way but only the selected people: heads of villages and families, sorcerers, warriors. These monuments are set up in public places such as cross-roads where many people pass. The drawings on stones depict ancestors (*khatree*) on white horses, they wear turbans and festive robes and carry weapons. Usually sun and new moon considered as "witnesses" are depicted besides the ancestors whose names are also written on the stones. During the Diwali festival ancestors are worshipped at these places which includes possession: the worshipper takes himself into a trance with the help of liquor and by swinging his head. The spirit of the dead (*bhut*) enters him and speaking through his mouth names the animal to be sacrificed (KOPPERS–JUNGBLUT 1976: II, 153–154). At the Diwali festival ancestors are also worshipped at home. Offerings are brought to them at the sacrifice places of stone heaps where the local deities are venerated as well. These places are covered with pots and small horse figures made of clay that have been brought here as offerings.

The cult of the dead is a characteristic feature of the religion of Bhils. While the spirits of the venerable *khatrees* are generally helpful, *bhuts* of relatives and acquaintances are often feared. Many Bhils believe that the good people remain with God Bhagwan after their death, the evil have to be reborn in order to be punished. (KOPPERS–JUNGBLUT 1976: I, 226–227)

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Beliefs and religious observances that are central for the ordinary people of India are not always as important in Sanskrit texts. Belief in divine ancestors and the dead who are not subject to rebirth and still do not depart to the transcendental realm does not have much support in "scriptural" Hinduism. However, they are significant in the religious life of villages in several parts of India and their cult supports the group identity both at the family and the community level.

The belief in the return and presence of ancestors (e. g. in possession) belongs to the indigenous ideas of India, it is probably a pre-Aryan tradition. Both the Tulus as a Dravidian people and the tribal Bhils stand on the margin of the Aryan culture and religion. The Bhils have actually been outsiders, only recently the Hinduist missionary activities have started among them in the villages near Jhabua and the first temples have been erected. It is possible to follow the process of integration of these local cults in "high" Hinduism (e. g. the brahmin plays one of the central roles in *bhuuta* cult).

Dynamic relationship between learned and popular religious traditions can be traced in different cultures both in a diachronic and synchronic perspective. In medieval and early modern Europe we can see the conflicts of the two which are manifested in witch trials and persecution of heretics, fight of the Church against heathendom and cult of nature. In ancient and contemporary India we can follow the constant dialogue between the "scriptural" and popular Hinduism, their interfusion is the dominating tendency.

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"According to the holistic concepts of the self, the ego links itself to a superior being through the confraternity forms. This being can be Mary, Jesus, or God in general. Within this link it can reinterpret itself, its life and social role. In times of rapid social change when individual life frames disintegrate – as was the situation in Hungary in the second half of the 19th century, the early years of the 20th century and following the elections of 1990 – there is an increase in the number and role of religious movements and confraternities. This is because they help to restore the life frames of the individual. Once the society has been restructured, the individual's integration and role in the society is stabilized and the role of the religious confraternities declines."

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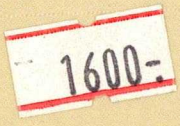

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